

OUTPOST OF EMPIRES



*Niagara





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OUTPOST OF EMPIRES

A SHORT HISTORY OF NIAGARA COUNTY

by

JOHN AIKEN JOHN WILHELMS ERIC BRUNGER RICHARD AIKEN

ROBERT WILHELMS maps by THOMAS BRUNGER

Reading Specialist
GORDON EDDY

ORIGINAL SKETCHES by NORMAN F. TRUESDALE

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1961

Dedicated to:

KENT WISBAUM

STEVE AIVES

GEOFFREY BRUNGER

FLORENCE AIKEN

Acknowledgements

It is particularly fitting in a work on local history, where the secondary sources are scarce and often in error, to acknowledge those organizations and individuals who were of service. Though it is not possible to mention each one separately, some individuals gave so greatly of their time and knowledge, that the authors would like to express their appreciation.

The greatest assistance to the authors was given by Clarence O. Lewis, Niagara County Historian. A student of his county's history for half a century, Mr. Lewis read the manuscript in its entirety and made many valuable suggestions. In addition, he proved to be a most useful source of primary materials. Without his help this book would have been much less accurate and complete. Julia Hull Winner, Deputy County Historian of Niagara, aided the authors, particularly concerning developments in Royalton for which town she is historian.

Others who read the manuscript in whole or in part included Professor Houston Robison of the Social Studies Department and Professor Irving Tesmer of the Science Department, both at State University of New York, College of Education, Buffalo and Minnie Jack of the East High School, Kenmore. Dr. Virginia Cummings and Dr. Marion White of the Humboldt Museum of Science in Buf-

falo were especially helpful on the earlier chapters dealing with the Indians. Richard McCarthy of Lockport, whose work in archeology in Western New York is well known, also read these chapters.

City of Niagara Falls Historian, Marjorie Williams also helped in the providing of source material and helpful suggestions. Alice Pickup and Lester Smith of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society were especially helpful in furnishing source materials. In the section on agriculture, L. A. Dickerson, county farm agent for Niagara, gave the authors much information from his own work as well as leads for further material. The authors also benefited from the research done by Louis Mazzei, Alphonso Gavin, Margaret Brett, and Paul Brucato.

Finally Janet Gilbert, Supervisor of Social Studies, Niagara Falls, both stimulated and encouraged the authors during the two years of research and writing.

In addition to the organizations mentioned above, the authors would like to express their appreciation to the libraries and Chambers of Commerce in the cities and towns of the county for their assistance. The authors assume complete responsibility for any errors that may appear in the book.

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Our main objective in *Outpost of Empires* was to produce a short, readable, and clearly organized history of the Niagara region. A history that would be an accurate portrayal of events as they happened and individuals as they worked, played, fought, and died. We have made no attempt to create the past in a golden light. We have also tried to produce a history that would recall the war-cry of the Iroquois or a lone pioneer felling trees in the forest, or perhaps horses straining on the Erie Canal tow-path or the quake and roar of blasting on the Niagara power site.

Another objective was to place regional history in proper perspective to national history. It has been said that national history is but a generalization of regional and local history. If so, then regional history has full meaning only when seen in relation to national history. Wherever possible we have been guided by this idea and tied local and national history together. We also attempted to fill the gap of the "forgotten period" of American history, the period between 1865 and 1900. We have devoted several chapters to this period, most of the material appearing in book form for the first time.

Although John Aiken was the major contributor, the present work is the result of much co-operation among the authors. Parts of the manuscript have changed hands many times. With some chapters it is difficult to say they represent the work of one writer, since these chapters were written and rewritten by different men. Thus the authors accept collective responsibility for the complete work.

J.A., J.W., E.B., R.A.



Introduction:

**MEET THE
OUTPOST OF EMPIRES**

Meet the Outpost of Empires

Nature forms Niagara County

On a map of New York place your finger on the Falls of Niagara and you are pointing to the heart of the Niagara area. All the land within sixty miles of the waterfalls is the Niagara region. However, this story is about that part which is now the north-western corner of New York State, called Niagara County.

For more than two hundred years this small area of land, along the Niagara River, was one of the most important areas in North America. Its location on a natural waterway into the heart of North America made it an outpost of empires. First it was an outpost of the Iroquois. Then the French made it an outpost of their fur trading empire. After the French it became an outpost of the British. Finally it came into the hands of Americans to become an outpost of New York, the Empire State.

Any story of this "Outpost of Empires" naturally ought to begin with the land itself. So this chapter is about the land—how its hills and plains and waterways were formed, what plants and animals lived here, what land and water areas the first French explorer saw, and finally how resources drew a parade of people into Niagara County—Indians, priests, fur traders, pioneers, farmers, and industrial men.

What was it like in the beginning?

An ancient ocean covered the land

Over five hundred million years ago a vast warm ocean rolled over Niagara County and much of North America. Winds sweeping across the vastness pushed white-capped waves before them. Long shafts of sunlight pierced the surface, warming the shallow ocean. In the warm depths lay Niagara County and much of New York, an ocean bottom of underwater hills, plains, and valleys.

The rugged bottom swarmed with plant and animal life. Coral and strange looking clams and other shellfish littered the bottom, and a tangled mass of eerie plants swayed gently with the shifting tides and currents. Around coral reefs brightly colored fish-like creatures hunted, fought, and died.

And in the shadowy depths, sea monsters tore at one another or cruised about hunting other fish. These giant fish glided through the water above Niagara County for many years. When they died, their bodies drifted down and settled on the bottom for scientists to unearth millions of years later.

A strange land arose from the water

Countless centuries passed. The earth's crust heaved and folded. And Niagara country arose from the ocean depths. Hills and high coral reefs jutted from the surging ocean and giant waves crashed upon the shore. As centuries slipped by, the ocean continued to lower. More land emerged from the water. What is now Lake Ontario was a valley with rivers flowing through it. The coral reefs formed part of the escarpment stretching from Lewiston to Rochester, New York, and the land wore a blanket of trees and grass.

During this time the climate was often warmer than it is today. Strange animals roamed the land. Herds of tiny horses, odd-looking bisons, and deer grazed on grassy plains and valleys. One strange dweller was the great, shaggy, elephant-like mastodon. This huge brown beast wandered about eating grass and other plants growing in the Niagara region. Many died when the area turned into a frozen wasteland. Only bones remind us that they once made the Niagara region their home.

How did the Ice Age affect Niagara?

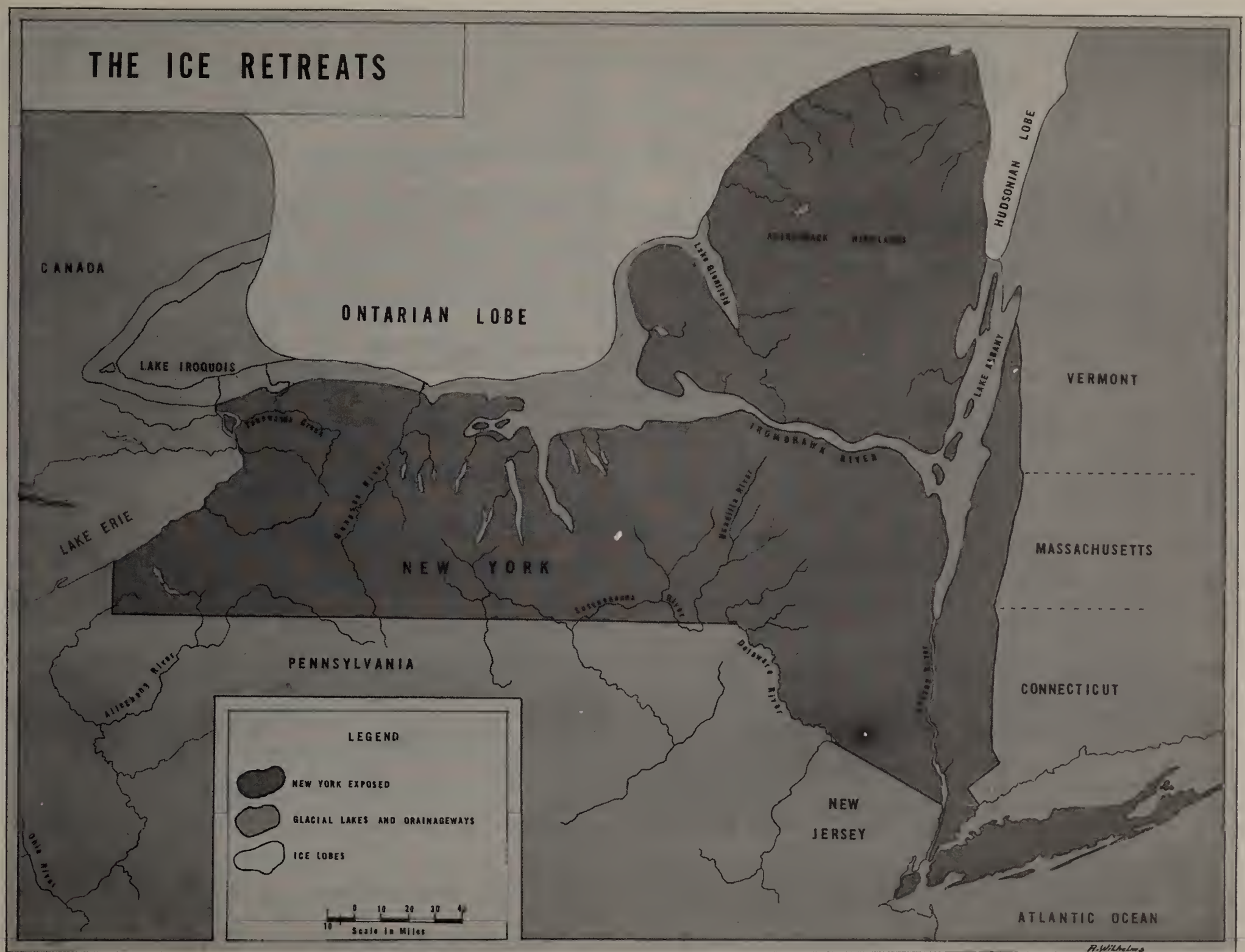
Four times the Niagara became a frozen, lifeless land

A million years ago the climate changed. Snow fell more often and winters turned colder and lasted longer. At last the sun disappeared behind flake-filled skies. For centuries snow piled up and packed down into ice. Oceans dropped two hundred to six hundred feet as freezing temperatures turned the water to ice.

Then a great glacier, a sheet of ice over a mile thick, crept out of the north. Slowly it crawled southward, snapping giant trees like twigs; pushing, grinding, crushing everything in its way. Life unable to move south died. The glacier deepened many valleys and rounded off mountain tops. In time the great ice sheet covered much of the northern United States; including most of New York. The glacier blanketed Niagara area for many thousands of years. There was no sound here then except the wind and the grinding of ice. Niagara County was a white world of ice, snow, and wind. The Ice Age had arrived.

Thousands of years passed before the bright sun sparkled on the glacier and warm southern breezes blew across its icy heights. The ice cap melted and retreated slowly northward, leaving heaps of stones and dirt the ice had carried south. Centuries later it returned. Four times ice sheets covered Niagara, and four times they vanished under the sun's rays and warm winds. And four times animals moved south and then returned as the glacier melted.

THE ICE RETREATS



The glacier helped form present water and land areas

Some twelve to twenty-five thousand years ago the last glacier began its slow movement north. For a time it blocked the St. Lawrence River with a mile high ice dam.

Water from the melting glacier gradually flooded the Niagara region and most of New York bordering Lake Ontario. Water filled the Ontario Basin and crept southward to the Niagara escarpment. In time it rose above the escarpment and spilled onto the plain to the south. Niagara was again under water.

But bright sunny days drove the glacier further north, clearing the St. Lawrence and Mohawk valleys. Then glacial water flooding the Niagara region drained through these valleys into the Atlantic Ocean. As flood water lowered, the long backbone of the escarpment arose from the depths. A lake called glacial Lake Tonawanda covered much of the land above the escarpment. Water from Lake Tonawanda, and other lakes further west, drained through the Niagara region and poured over the escarpment, forming rivers and creeks.

The receding glacial flood water continued to slip down the lofty escarpment until it washed against its base. From the escarpment base the water stretched far north into Canada. This huge body of water was called Lake Iroquois and, like other glacial waters, it also lowered. Gradually it shrank in size to form Lake Ontario.

Ontario Lake Plain Traveling Route 104 connecting Lewiston and Rochester and looking north, you can see the sloping shore of old Lake Iroquois. The old lake bottom between the escarpment and Lake Ontario is now the Ontario Lake Plain. As Lake Iroquois lowered, the Niagara River tumbled over the escarpment, forming several small waterfalls. After a time these small waterfalls became one, Niagara Falls. Beginning at Lewiston, the falls wore away the rock seven miles south to their present site approximately fifteen thousand years ago.

When the Niagara area warmed the last time, plants and trees like those of today sprouted and reached toward the sun. Later thick forests with winding creeks and dense swamps sprawled across the land. Most animals that had gone south returned to wander in forests and swamps. But mastodons and other such animals had vanished forever.

Finally, according to scientists, bronze-skinned hunters whose ancestors had migrated from Asia, trod the wooded hills and plains of the Niagara area. They hunted, and reared families, and grew old, never dreaming that one day white-skinned people would destroy their way of life.

And so, when one of the first French explorers came in 1615, the main features of the Niagara area had been formed—escarpment, Lake Ontario, Niagara River, the Ontario Lake Plain, and Niagara Gorge and Falls. The French found Niagara wrapped in a blanket of forest and the Neuter Indians masters of the area.

It now remains for us to take a closer look at the land, one of the first French explorers, Stephen (Étienne) Brulé, might have seen if he paddled through the Niagara area in 1615. No one knows for certain which route Brulé took. But one way he might have gone is the Niagara River-Lake Erie route. This seems likely because most travel was by water; and his Huron guides would stay clear of country further east, the home of their bitter enemies, the Senecas. Besides, Brulé was an explorer and had been since he was sent to live with the Hurons at the age of sixteen. So it is easy to imagine his youthful curiosity pulling him along the Niagara River toward the great waterfalls to the south.



The first white man arrives

Stephen Brulé came If the young Stephen Brulé paddled into the Niagara region in 1615, he was one of the first white men to see it. From a small French outpost on Lake Nipissing, Canada, Brulé and a small party of Hurons set out to visit Indians living south of the Iroquois. They paddled and portaged frail bark canoes south from Lake Nipissing to Lake Ontario. Hugging Lake Ontario's western shore and camping ashore nights, they made their way eastward toward Niagara.

One evening in mid-September, they camped on the lake shore a few miles west of the Niagara River. Squatting around the campfire, Brulé heard the sound of falling water carried on the wind. He listened carefully as the Indians talked of the great waterfall and lake to the south. His deeply-tanned face showed excitement as Hurons whispered about the spirit living in the thundering waters. He wondered about the distant roar the night wind carried as he dropped off to sleep.

What features of Niagara County did Stephen Brulé probably see on his trip?

The lower Niagara River flowed north through the Ontario Plain

Early next morning Brulé and his party broke camp and glided out onto Lake Ontario. Their canoes pointed toward Niagara County and the rising sun. The morning sun flashing on the calm water forced the paddlers to squint. To the north, water and sky melted together on the horizon. Southward, the shore was a solid wall of trees except for a few small natural clearings. Streaks of early morning mist resting on the water hid part of the steep banks. Only the steady dipping of paddles, and the lapping of water against the canoe sides broke the early morning stillness.

Shortly they arrived at the mouth of the Niagara River. Lake and river sweeping together rocked the frail canoes as they crossed the sandbar and entered the wide river mouth, heading south. On their left the future site of Fort Niagara jutted out into the lake. Even in 1615 few trees stood on the site. The countless campfires of Seneca and other Indian traders and fishermen had taken most of them for wood.

Dense forests abounded with animals

The lean and hard canoers paddled by the clearing and continued up river. Dark forests of oak and hickory towered above them on both sides of the steep red banks. And the sharp, damp smell of forest and river filled the air. The dense forests stretched for miles on both sides of the river. The whole Ontario Lake Plain was thick shadowy forest; only here and there was it broken by small clearings and swamps. With powerful strokes the party paddled up the Niagara River. About noon they pulled onto a narrow beach on the west side of the river. After resting a time, they pushed into the river and continued southward again.

Pushing up the river, the party startled flocks of ducks and geese into hurried flight. A few times the canoers slipped through weed beds where feeding fish broke the surface after insects. Brulé and the Hurons watched deer, bear, mink, and other animals come down to the river. Sometimes the animals disappeared into the dark woods at the sight of men and canoes; sometimes they watched curiously as the men paddled by. Fur bearing animals were important. The fur trade later brought the French to the Niagara region. And it was the fur trade that caused over two hundred years of conflict here.

Watching the steep red banks slide by, Brulé and the Hurons paddled steadily up river. From time to time they placed their paddles across the canoes and rested. After a few minutes they swung into a steady rhythm that covered miles rapidly.

The river eroded the escarpment

Sometime after the noon stop, they saw the distant blue-green cliffs of the escarpment. These woody cliffs towered above the tall trees lining the river banks. As they neared the escarpment, the banks seemed to close in on them. Forested cliffs reared sharply ahead on both sides of the river. The Niagara River, cutting through the escarpment by countless years of erosion, formed a huge "V." Several times as they battled the swift current near the escarpment, Brulé caught a flash of bronze skin in the underbrush crowning the river bank.



A Neuter village lay at the base of the escarpment

Finally they reached the wooded escarpment. There was a break in the high red bank on the left and a well beaten foot path led to the water's edge. Several canoes lay upside down on the steep bank. Above the bank, in a clearing, was the stockaded Neuter village later called Onguiaahra, or Ongiara. The late afternoon sun cast long shadows over the village and thin columns of smoke trailed skyward from inside the stockade. Nothing moved, not even dogs. The village was silent.

Brulé saw no Indians but he knew his party had been under close watch for some time. For the first time he felt uneasy. Although Hurons were welcome in Neuter bark lodges, anything might happen. With a slight hand movement, Brulé motioned the other canoe toward shore. As they pulled toward the bank, Neuters cautiously left the stockade, with weapons ready. But the Hurons came in peace and the Neuters soon swarmed about the travelers, pushing and shoving and laughing.

The sight of Brulé delighted the Neuters, who probably had never seen a white man before. They crowded about him, pointing, and touching his skin and clothing. Wherever he walked Indians tagged along, and his every move brought sounds of pleasure from the admiring Neuters. Pleased with their wondrous guest they happily set about preparing a feast and a dance in his honor.

A portage route by-passed Niagara Falls

That evening, during the feasting, dancing and chanting, Brulé learned more about the rapids and great waterfalls up river.

He studied maps drawn in the dust and noted the eight-mile trail, or portage, along which the Indians carried their canoes around the lower rapids and great waterfall. But with the Indians crowding him, he had to give up attempts to learn more about Neuter lands. Brulé got little sleep that night in the bark lodge. Curious Indians strolled in at all hours to see and touch the strange white man.

Next morning, before the sun had slanted into the lodges, Brulé and the Hurons were awake and making ready for the portage. With Neuter help they toiled up the escarpment with canoes and equipment. After friendly good-bys the small party started over the narrow forest trail, walled in by towering oak trees.

Later, this narrow trail became the most important road in the Niagara area. Vast wealth in furs moved over the portage and nations fought bloody battles to control it. But Brulé knew none of these things as he tramped over the narrow path loaded with equipment. Nor could he guess that thousands of other feet supporting heavy loads would also tread the damp earth where his moccasined feet pressed. Brush beside the trail pulled at him as he pushed by it. Morning dew on the bushes soon drenched him from foot to waist. Hour after hour, mile after mile, they moved single file over the narrow portage.

The eight mile portage from the Neuter village to the upper Niagara River took most of that September day. Most of the way the portage followed the rim of the deep gorge dug by the Niagara

River. Nearly three hundred feet below they heard the dull roar of the lower rapids which the Neuters had mentioned. But soon the roaring waterfalls ahead drowned out all other sound. As they neared the end of the portage, Brulé noted a change in his Huron guides. They glanced uneasily into the dark forest and at each other. They were on sacred ground and feared their presence might anger the spirit of the thundering waters.

Finally the narrow woodland path widened into a small clearing beside the river. Charred remains of old campfires dotted the clearing and the damp smell of river and forest hung heavily on the air. Standing on the river bank, Brulé looked out onto a broad, swift river but failed to see the falls. Leaving the Hurons to make camp, he followed a small overgrown path winding off to the right in the direction of the waterfalls. Struggling through tangled underbrush he approached the gorge. The forest ended suddenly and he found himself peering into the deep chasm. Far below, the falls crashed into the river, churning it into foam that floated in patches and streaks on the river.

Awestruck, Brulé stood gazing at the tumbling water until darkness crept over the falls and gorge. Then he stumbled back to camp and sat watching the fire glow in the darkness as he ate. Later he crawled into his blanket and the roar of the falls dimmed to a murmur as he dropped off to sleep.

Upper Niagara River country was wild and undeveloped

Before sun-up next morning Brulé and his guides pushed the canoes from shore and paddled out onto the upper Niagara River.

A few hundred yards from shore they stopped and looked back on the churning rapids above the falls. Several islands perched on the brink of the falls. Goat Island, the largest, divided the rapids into two waterfalls. And off the south shore of Goat Island, the Three-Sister Islands reached out into the rapids above the horseshoe-shaped fall. On Goat Island's north side, Green Island lay in the rapids above the American Fall.

The current carried the canoes a few yards down-river toward the falls. They dug their paddles into the river and moved eastward. The roar of the falls lessened as they paddled steadily south-east on the wide, quiet river. Keeping to the left bank, they glided by Grass Island, Gill Creek, and Cayuga Island. Brulé studied the shore and made mental notes of the islands, creeks, and animal life.

A few miles above the falls, Grand Island divides the Niagara River. Keeping to the east branch, they paddled on the curving

river southward, past Tonawanda Creek emerging from a great swamp. Past the south end of Grand Island where the two branches of the river join again, they moved southward until they reached the wide expanse of Lake Erie.

If Brulé took the Niagara River-Lake Erie route, when he and his Huron guides reached Lake Erie they passed out of the Niagara region and skirted southern New York to escape the Senecas. They probably portaged from creek to creek eastward. At last Brulé reached the Susquehanna Indians living south of the Iroquois.

Taking the southern route to the Susquehanna, Brulé did not see all of what is now Niagara County. The Ontario Lake Plain played an important part in the history of Niagara County. In time villages dotted this plain—Wilson, Olcott, Ransomville, Newfane, Barker, Middleport, Gasport, and others. Nor did he see Eighteen Mile, Twelve Mile and other creeks flowing into Lake Ontario which provided water power for early settlers. He also missed the area above the escarpment. The future sites of Lockport, Sanborn, and other villages lay hidden beneath a dense forest. But these villages and areas make the story of later chapters in the history of Niagara County.



People Migrate to Niagara

Brulé's trip gave us a close-up view of the most important waterways, and land areas, with their forests and animals. It now remains to see why these resources brought Indians, fur traders, pioneers, and industrial men to Niagara County.

Why did these people come?

Indians came in search of game and fish

Thousands of years ago Indians trailing game animals drifted toward the Niagara region. For years they had followed the lead of medicine men who promised a land of plenty where the sun rose. They wandered eastward through valleys, over mountains, and across rivers, living upon animals they killed with bone and flint-tipped weapons.

Finally they passed from hot sunny plains into the cool half-light of forests. Beneath the leafy blanket they found a land teeming with game. Their wandering years ended. Warriors laid down their weapons and raised crude bark shelters. Women unstrapped babes from their backs and helped build huts or gathered fruits and nuts in the forest. Among the warriors and women, naked children scampered about trying to help and so learn the ways of their elders. Centuries later the women learned to plant a few crops, thus adding to their food supplies.

For thousands of years Indians lived in a lonely forest world limited to a few hundred miles. They knew nothing of the white man who would come and claim their land.

Traders sought the riches of the fur trade

Finally the white men came. French priests, fur traders, and explorers paddled into the Niagara region. The fur traders sought pelts for European markets. Traders saw the importance of the Niagara Portage. The portage linked an important system of waterways into the heart of North America. Whoever controlled Niagara Portage also controlled the rich western fur trade.

French traders wasted little time in taking advantage of the portage. In exchange for rich pelts, a steady stream of French brandy, blankets, trinkets and weapons soon passed into the eager hands of the Indians. Bent under heavy loads, long lines of Indians toiled over the portage. In exchange for their labor the French paid them in trade goods. And a stream of fur pelts flowed back to Europe.

Meanwhile, a long struggle between the French and British was taking shape. Eager for a larger share of the fur trade, British traders began cutting in on French trade. To halt the British, the French government in 1726 built Fort Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River. For a hundred years both British and French claimed the Niagara region. Finally, in 1759, during the French and Indian War, it fell to the British.

The British held the Niagara area, with the portage, for thirty-seven years and then gave it by treaty to the Americans. In time the fur trade declined. The portage, however, remained a western trade route. When roads were strung across New York State between Albany and Buffalo, trade on the portage began slipping. And when the Erie Canal opened in 1825 the portage trade gradually collapsed. Like the fur trade, it became only a memory in the story of Niagara County. Today there is little evidence left at Lewiston or Niagara Falls of the docks and warehouses and ships that once handled goods shipped over the portage.

Pioneer farmers came for cheap fertile land Roads and canals ended the day of the portage trader but they brought the pioneer farmer. Soon after the Treaty of Big Tree (1797) put the Iroquois on reservations, pioneer farmers began moving into Niagara County. Cheap and fertile land drew the pioneers to the area. They set to work clearing farm land from forests. The sound of the ax was heard where once Indian war-whoops had shattered the forest stillness. Above and below the escarpment, forest gave way to pioneer farms. Soon roads wound through forests, tying scattered farms and settlements together. Wolf, bear, and deer gave way to ox, cow, and hog. Fields, orchards, villages, and cities took over ancient Indian hunting grounds. Niagara County was changing under the restless energy of the white men.

Niagara County had much to offer farmers. Nearby lakes, heating and cooling more slowly than land, made the countryside warmer in winter and cooler in summer than other areas as far north. Temperatures seldom fell far below zero or soared above ninety degrees. Fertile soil and a rainfall of thirty-five to forty inches a year produced bountiful crops.

The pioneer farmer prospered under these conditions. In time his bark and log cabin gave way to a more sturdy home of clapboard or brick and he raised more crops than he could use. Soon he raised one or two crops for sale, depending on the sales money to live. When this happened, the income from the sales of his products improved his living conditions. Pioneer days were about over and the era of modern farming had begun.

Natural resources attracted industrial workers and leaders Hand in hand with modern farming came a new way of making a living. Attracted by Niagara County's natural resources, industry gradually stepped ahead of farming in importance.

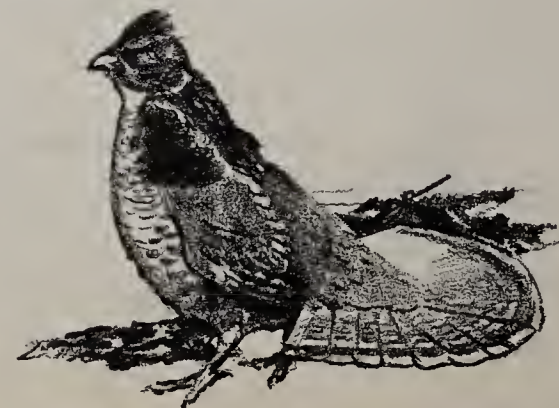
Niagara County's most important resource is water — fast-running water. Besides the mighty Niagara River, Niagara County has some eight creeks flowing northward into Lake Ontario. Very early in Niagara County's history, water power was important. When enough scattered cabins dotted the wilderness, a pioneer raised a rickety sawmill on the banks of some lonely creek. But as men learned how to use water power to make electricity, great turbines replaced the creaking old mill-wheels. In time these turbines, whirled by falling water, made Niagara County one of the great hydro-electric producing areas of the world.

Niagara County has other resources that draw industries, Great layers of limestone, formed by the skeletons of countless shellfish of the ancient ocean, lie close to the surface of the ground. Limestone quarries sprinkle the area, especially along the escarpment. These quarries sent building material throughout the nation.

Finally Niagara County has an unusual kind of resource which supports an industry—breath-taking waterfalls and rapids. The name Niagara Falls is famous throughout the world as a natural wonder. People flock here from all parts of the earth. To care for visitors an important industry developed—the tourist industry.

With industry came people—people to work in the factories and mills, people to supply the needs of the cities, people to care for the sick and to guard against fire and crime, people to build and develop Niagara County.

Now we can understand why people came to Niagara County. Indians came to hunt its teeming game; the French and British to control the gateway to western fur trade; pioneer farmers to make homes; and modern men to run industries. In the following chapters we will take a closer look at these people and see how they lived and changed Niagara County. The next chapter is the story of the first of them, the Indians.



Your History Workshop

Words and terms you should know

outpost	garrison	hydro-electric
escarpment	climate	river valley
pelts	glacier	lake plain

Where is it on the map?

Quebec	Niagara River	Grand Island
Niagara County	The Great Lakes	St. Lawrence River
Montreal	Hudson River	Mohawk River

Who's Who in history?

Stephen (Etienne) Brulé

How carefully did you read?

1. Describe the ancient ocean covering the Niagara region.
2. Define Ice Age.
3. How many times was the Niagara region covered with ice?
4. Explain the development of Lake Ontario.
5. What part did the glacier play in forming lakes and rivers?
6. Of what importance were Niagara's fur-bearing animals?
7. From where did the ancestors of American Indians come?
8. What was the name later given to the Neuter village on the banks of the Niagara River?
9. What Indians accompanied Stephen Brulé?
10. Why are the falls of Niagara so far inland from Lake Ontario?
11. Who gained control of the portage from the French?
12. What measures did the French take to protect the portage and fur trade?
13. Explain why the fur trade declined.
14. What attractions did Niagara area hold for pioneer farmers?
15. What is Niagara's greatest resource?

Activities to help you understand the Introductory Part

1. Prepare yourself for the task ahead by getting acquainted with the book which you will use throughout the year's study. Examine it carefully as you answer the following questions in your notebook.
 - a. What is the name of my history book?
 - b. Who are the authors?
 - c. What company published my book? When (copyright date)? Where?

- d. Locate the table of contents. How many parts (units) are there in my book? On what page does the index begin?
- e. What is the section called that is found at the end of each unit? List six types of exercises found there.

2. Using the headings and topics which appear in the pages of the introduction, make an outline to sum up the unit. The following sample will help to get you started. When you have finished, study the outline to acquire an overview of the unit. Introductory Part. *Meet the Outpost of Empires*

I. Nature forms Niagara County

A. What was it like in the beginning?

1. An ancient ocean covered everything
2. A strange land emerged

B.

(continue)

3. With several of your classmates, survey local museums, libraries, the city hall, and other public buildings to find out what relics, pictures, etc., related to the Niagara region can be located.
4. Make a large outline map of Niagara region; then draw and label the possible route taken by Stephen Brulé in 1615.
5. On page 6 in your *New York State Atlas* is a physical map of the Niagara area (part of a state map or some other map of New York State will do also). Study it, and then make a relief map using flour and salt. Next paint it to show elevation. Add whatever details you feel will aid your study of the region.
6. On a piece of construction paper paint the word "HOMES" vertically. After each letter spell out the name of a Great Lake.
7. Using reference books, make a climate map of the Niagara area.
8. On an outline map of North America show the extent of the Ice Age. Then in one corner insert a small map of New York State and surrounding area. Here show the extent of the ice sheet. Refer to page 4 of your *New York State Atlas* for details.
9. Do some research to gather interesting facts about the Falls.
10. Prepare a report to present to the class on pre-historic animals inhabiting the northern part of North America. Your report will be more interesting if illustrated by drawings, maps, or pictures.

11. Write an imaginary and original story of Brulé's meeting with the Neuters.
12. Assume you are Stephen Brulé. Write a letter to a French official in Quebec urging the development of fur trade in Niagara.
13. Find out how the St. Lawrence River got its name and report to the class.
14. Develop a list of place names (Three Sister Islands, Goat Island, etc.) and try to discover their origins.

Books with exciting stories

Richards Atlas of New York State. An excellent historical atlas containing much basic information about New York State history in written as well as map form.

Schwarz, Jeanne, *New York State in Story.* Grades 5-9. Chapter I has a good, direct, and simple account of the geology, natural resources, and other geographical factors of New York State.

White, Anne T., *Prehistoric America.* (Landmark). Grades 6-10.

Hungerford, Edward, *Pathways of Empires.* Grades 7-10. A description of waterways and their importance.

Newland, David, *Mineral Resources of the State of New York.* Very difficult.

New York State Department of Commerce Pamphlets, *Guide to Central and Western New York.* 9-12.

Part I

THE IROQUOIS NATION WINS CONTROL OF WESTERN NEW YORK

1. Indians make Niagara County their home
2. The Iroquois defeat their enemies

1. *Indians make Niagara County their home*

In Niagara County today towns and cities and villages and farms cover the land that Indian warriors and hunters once roamed. River and lake echo to the noises of boats and ships where once only the splash of Indian paddles was heard. Automobiles speed over highways built on old Indian trails. Airplanes cruise a sky once darkened by great numbers of passenger pigeons, ducks, and geese in flight. This is our modern world of smoke and steel and speed. But what was Niagara County like when the Indians came? And how did Indians live before white men came and changed Indian life forever?

Hunters from Asia come to North America

Ancestors of the Indians

According to scientists, our story begins around twenty-five thousand years ago when a ragged and hungry band of hunters crossed from Asia to North America over a bridge of land. They trudged a path that had long been trampled by mammoths and other animals. The men in the band gripped spears and squinted toward the distant horizon for signs of game or enemies. The women followed, carrying babes strapped on their backs, their heads bent in the face of the biting winds that whipped off the northern ice caps. Black-eyed children struggled to keep up with their parents as the band moved eastward.

How did Indians come to settle Niagara region?

Thus the first people pushed into North America. They had come from Asia and more Asian hunters soon followed this first tattered band, crossing on the land bridge to what is now Alaska. Band after band kept coming to Alaska even after water covered the land bridge, forming Bering Strait. Once these hunters and their families reached Alaska they soon deserted the cold north-land and tracked the game animals southward into what is now the United States. Band followed band south onto the plains to hunt the shaggy bison that roamed in the tall grasses there.

As time passed, these early Americans spread out. Most of them wandered further southward into Mexico and Central and South America. But finally some bands drifted into what is now Ontario and New York State. These wandering hunters left evidence of their stay. Weapons and tools dug up from time to time



remind us that they once lived here. Later, other groups followed the game trails from the west and settled and remained in the northeastern part of North America. Among these later tribes of hunters were the people afterwards known as the Huron, Neuter, and New York Iroquois Indians. These people raised stockaded villages in Ontario, in the Niagara region, and in central New York. Our story in this and the following chapter is mainly about them.

Indians adapt to the wilderness

All of us of course have heard a lot of things about Indians. Some of it is true but much of it is not. We do not have space here to go into the great detail about the life of the Eastern Wood-land Indians which is easily found in many books. Instead we want to bring out the facts which have a bearing on Indian history after the white men arrived.

What training did Indians need?

Indians needed strength, courage, and skill

An Indian depended upon his strength, courage, and skill because he needed these qualities to survive in the wilderness.

He had to have strength to fight his enemies, courage to stand pain, and skill to hunt the animals upon which his life depended. Naturally he prized these qualities and judged other Indians in terms of them.

Of course an Indian was not born with strength, courage, and skill. He had to be trained. As an important part of his training a young Indian learned that any show of weakness or cowardliness was bad. A weakling or coward could easily bring shame and perhaps disaster upon his family, clan, and tribe. Above all, an Indian was expected to be a man, but age alone did not mean manhood. A young Indian had to go through a torture ceremony to prove that he was a man and thus ready to become a warrior.

Only if he passed the torture ceremony could a boy become a man and join the other men on the hunt or warpath. If he failed to stand the pain and suffering, he became an object of hate and scorn and as a punishment he was forced to work with the women and girls in the fields. Sometimes he even had to leave the tribe and make his way alone in the wilderness. Often he committed suicide.



War was part of their life

An Indian continued to show strength, courage, and skill all through his life. The best place to show these qualities was on the war path. Any warrior might start a war party and thus become a war chief whenever he felt like it. He simply went about his village singing his war song to attract other warriors. In the center of the village he drove his hatchet into the war post as a crowd of warriors gathered around it. Of course this only happened if the would-be war chief was already a proven warrior and had taken many scalps. If enough warriors caught the war fever a war dance began as drums beat and chants filled the air. Painted and feathered, the warriors stamped, whooped, and shuffled about the war post. After the wild dance, they moved out of the village and fled off into the forest to attack the enemy village.

The war chief led the war party swiftly and silently along narrow forest trails. All warriors in the party traveled light, carrying only pouches of dried corn and their weapons. Indians usually made a surprise attack on an enemy camp at dawn, shattering the quiet of the woods with wild yells and howls. A moment after an attack began, the enemy camp rang with the screams of women and children who speedily fled into the forest to hide while the men grabbed weapons and fought the attackers.

After the raid, scalped and mangled dead lay scattered about the bark lodges, which the war party set afire. Then excited warriors quickly searched the nearby woods, hunting the women and children who had fled when the raid began. After they collected all the prisoners, the warriors loaded them with the plunder of the camp and headed home. They killed and scalped all prisoners unable to keep up on the march along the homeward trail.

Near the home village the warriors sounded a war whoop for each prisoner they had taken on the raid. The loud whooping brought a huge crowd of relatives and friends bursting from the bark houses to meet the returning warriors and see the prisoners and plunder. The wild crowd soon surrounded the war party and yells and laughter split the air. Sometimes wails mixed with the laughter because even on successful raids not all warriors returned. The yelping crowd jabbed at the prisoners with sharply pointed sticks and struck them with clubs as it escorted the war party to the war post in the center of the village.



The war dance.

In the village, women quickly started fires and made ready for the feast. Around the war post the crowd gathered and prepared to listen as the warriors told about the raid. This was a high point of a warrior's life. One by one they rose and told about the attack and how bravely they had acted. This was their chance to praise themselves before the whole tribe and they welcomed it because they wanted most of all to be admired and honored.

They told how they had outwitted, outfought, and killed their enemies, and they waved grisly scalps and pulled prisoners before the crowd to prove their deeds. The crowd, seated in the firelight, screamed and yelped as the tales of the attack unfolded. The eyes of old and battle-scarred men shone as they recalled their own adventures on the war path. Young boys squirmed with excitement, dreaming of the day when they too would take the war path and be admired and honored before the whole tribe. Finally, when the last warrior had spoken, drums beat and the wild crowd jumped up and broke into a dance. The throb of drums mingled with the noise of turtle shell rattles and above the din the wild yelps and howls of the crowd, whirling madly in the firelight, rose on the night air.

When the dancing ended it was time to decide the fate of the prisoners captured on the raid. Warriors flung one prisoner after another into a circle of yelping Indians who hurled insults and jabbed at them with sticks. But it was up to the women as clan leaders to decide their fate—adoption or death. This was their ancient tribal right and they usually chose the strongest prisoners to replace warriors who had been killed in the fighting. Adoption was common among the Iroquois.

The wild crowd showed no mercy at all for the prisoners not chosen by the women for adoption. Nor was any expected. Doomed prisoners now had a chance to show their courage and thus bring honor to their family and tribe. They were bound to stakes and they usually sang their death songs as their captors tortured and burned them to death. Very brave prisoners were often eaten by their captors because they believed eating their flesh would increase their own bravery and make them better warriors. Scalps of doomed prisoners joined others fluttering on lances before the bark lodges.

Why did New York Indians unite in the League of the Iroquois?

In the fifteenth century such raids so weakened the Iroquois that chiefs of five Iroquois tribes gathered at Onondaga and

formed a league of peace. The Iroquois say that Hiawatha, an Onondaga chief, created this league. This legend helps explain the rise, in later times, of the Five Nations as one of the most powerful Indian confederacies in North America. Hiawatha, it is said, traveled from village to village in New York and Ontario, begging the chiefs to stop fighting and to join hands as brothers under the Tree of Peace at Onondaga. But Hiawatha was able to persuade only the Five Nations to come and agree to make peace. After the Five Nations formed the League of the Iroquois they said that non-member tribes were enemies of the peace and in the seventeenth century finally destroyed them. Actually, need for fur to buy the white man's trade goods explains the destruction of these tribes as we shall see in the next chapter.

Who belonged to the League?

The Five Nations called themselves the People of the Longhouse because they lived in huge buildings called longhouses. They imagined their territory between the Genesee and Mohawk Valley to be a kind of longhouse. The two biggest nations in the League of the Iroquois had the important tasks of guarding the "League Longhouse" from enemies. The Senecas, living along the Genesee, kept invaders from breaking into Iroquois lands from the west. Thus the Senecas were known as the "keepers of the western door." The Mohawks, inhabiting the Mohawk Valley, kept watch at the "eastern door." The Onondagas, clustered in the geographic center of Iroquois territory, also had an important task in the League of the Iroquois. It was left to them to maintain the council fire and keep the records of the League of the Iroquois. The Oneidas and Cayugas, on either side of the Onondagas, were known as the "younger brothers" of the three bigger tribes. In 1713, the Tuscaroras, pushed from their hunting grounds in North Carolina, moved into New York and joined the League of the Iroquois, afterwards known as the Six Nations.

Much has been written about the importance of the League of the Iroquois. Actually, it was never as successful as many people think. The Five Nations, for instance, never united to fight against a common enemy. Even in wars to the death, as was the case when the Iroquois fought the Hurons and Neuters, only the Senecas and Mohawks joined to fight. The League of the Iroquois did help keep the peace among the Five Nations however, although even here it was able to do this because keeping the peace happened to be in the interest of the member tribes. Otherwise, the famous League of the Iroquois would surely have collapsed.

THE EXPANDING IROQUOIS EMPIRE 1626 - 1675



What was life in the longhouse?

The bark homes were a friendly place

We have said that the Indians who inhabited New York lived in longhouses. The longhouse had an important place in an Indian's life. It was his home and in it he did not have to be proud, fierce, and brave. He could relax and reveal the other side of his character, for he was among friends. Among his own people an Indian was helpful, kind, and merry, fond of jokes and laughter. The longhouse he lived in had been built through the cooperation of the whole village. Everyone joined in and helped when a new longhouse was needed. Men and boys went into the forest and cut saplings and wide strips of elm bark. With the saplings they raised the framework, and then the women and girls covered it with the bark strips, tying them in place with cord made from the inner bark of trees.

Indians liked to be together and it is not surprising that they built their houses so that they could be shared by many families. The longhouse was divided into stalls for sleeping, one for each family. The families shared round firepits dug in the center of the earthen floor between the stalls. A long open space ran the length of the longhouse and in the evenings it was always crowded with

men and women and scrambling children who made the whole place hum with gossip and ring with laughter and yells.

It was uncomfortable in longhouses

In spite of the merriment, a longhouse was not a comfortable home by our standards. Flea-infested dogs had the run of the place, often sharing even the sleeping platforms. With no windows and only a few smoke holes in the bark roof instead of chimneys, smoke was always a serious problem. At times it was almost unbearable, burning nostrils and inflaming eyes. Years of living in such a smoky dwelling often gave the Iroquois eye-trouble, especially the old people. Cold drafts were still another problem. Women stuffed moss and grass in cracks to keep out the wind but it did not help much.

But, for all of this, Indians liked life in the longhouse even in winter. On winter nights coppery figures grouped around each fire, laughing, joking, cooking, eating, telling stories, and gambling. Most Indians loved to gamble. In the heat of a game they often bet everything they had — weapons, clothing, even their wives. At times the gambling craze ran especially high and village challenged village with hordes of people as spectators. Often Indian gamblers tramped home through the snow late at night, barefoot and without clothing, yet laughing all the while.



An Iroquois home, the long house.

Women ruled the longhouse

Everyone who lived in a longhouse belonged to the same clan and the leader of the clan was always a woman. These clan matrons arranged all the ceremonies of the tribe, including marriage. Once a man married, he went to live in the longhouse of his bride's family. Here he could remain only so long as he behaved himself. Since he belonged to a different clan, he had nothing to say in his wife's longhouse, not even over how his children should be raised. This was left up to his wife and her relations, because the children always belonged to their mother's clan. All the relatives treated children as their own, always willing to teach them the work they would do as grown-ups, and rarely punishing them.

What were other wilderness activities of the Indians?

Farming was done by women

Although Indians did things together, they had strict rules on how work should be divided between men and women. In farming, for instance, after the men had cleared the land, their job was done. They could hunt, go on the war path, or sit around joking and talking. The women and girls did the actual farming. They planted, hoed, and harvested corn, beans and squash, the chief Indian crops. The women always raised corn, beans, and squash together and thus these crops were known as the "Three Sisters." They gave special care to corn because it was their most important food. They held festivals giving thanks to the Great Spirit for the corn.



Everyone enjoyed festivals like the corn festival

The Green Corn Festival was like many other Indian festivals. Everyone took part, young and old alike. In the village, cooking smells, the odor of burning tobacco, chunks of deer meat broiling on sticks, and ears of roasting corn drew a noisy, hungry crowd. Indians gayly fixed up in paint, feathers, and wampum shook turtle shell rattles and chanted songs and danced with slow steps as the surrounding woods returned the muffled throb of the drums. A festival always included games. Rough games like lacrosse often ended in serious injury or even

death but crazed by the excitement of the game nobody cared. At a festival, the Indians enjoyed the eating. They stuffed themselves with food until they could no longer eat any more. Later on when white traders brought them whiskey and brandy, they drank until they dropped unconscious.

Food gathering, fishing and hunting provided food

Although farming was their most important source of food, much of the food Indians ate came from the forest. Groups of women and girls roamed the woods together gathering pigeon eggs, nuts, roots, mushrooms, berries, and other foods. Whole families went off on fishing trips, often far from the village. Although they did this together, men and women had different tasks and they never did each other's work.

When it came time to hunt, again whole families made up the hunting parties. After the harvest, family after family tracked into the forest carrying dried corn, extra clothing, and weapons. Deep in the woods they set up their camps. With bows and arrows, nets, and blowguns, men and boys killed game for the women to skin and smoke. Hunting lasted until mid-winter. Then families, loaded with smoked meat and skins, returned home over pathways and streams hidden under ice and snow.

Indians traded

Trading was another thing Indian families did together. In Niagara County, the site of Fort Niagara was a favorite meeting place for Indian traders. Here they exchanged furs, clothing, and weapons, articles they had carved from wood or bone, and perhaps dried corn, beans and squash. A big part of trading was visiting and gossip. Indians liked to talk with other Indians and what was said or done on trading parties made for endless stories in the longhouses the following winter.

But trade would become a matter of life or death to Indians when white men arrived, and in the end it would destroy their way of life. The next section explains how this happened.

White traders change Indian ways of living

It was through trade that white men changed Indian ways of living. Indians very quickly became dependent upon the trade goods brought by the white men and in time forgot their old ways of life. Many in fact lived by trading alone, depending upon other Indians for their food supply. Nowhere can we find a better example of how this came about than in the story of the Hurons and Neuters. So let us return to the time, many thousands of years ago, when these people, then wandering hunters, pushed into the area of the Great Lakes.

When they reached the Great Lakes, the Hurons and Neuters separated. The Hurons settled north of Lake Ontario and the Neuters tracked onto the Niagara Peninsula north of Lake Erie. The Neuters spread eastward, raising stockaded villages in the thick woods that covered the Niagara Peninsula. In time some Neuters crossed the Niagara River and built stockaded settlements in what is now Niagara County. But most of the Neuters remained in Canada until the Iroquois destroyed them in 1651.

How did the Neuters live?

For centuries the Neuters farmed their fertile lands and hunted in the great forest. They raised large amounts of corn, beans, and squash, and grew crops of tobacco. They hunted in forests that teemed with deer, bear, and other animals. Ducks, geese, and pigeons were so numerous that they often blackened the sky. Neuters also had large beds of flint in their territory. Flint was a useful material for making arrowheads, axes, and knives. Other Indians needed it and were always eager to trade with the Neuters. The Neuters were fortunate Indians, at least until the French arrived.

Frenchmen appear in Niagara region

Why were Champlain and Brulé important?

Champlain settled Quebec and made enemies of the Iroquois

The first white man of any importance to the Neuters was the great French explorer, Samuel de Champlain. Champlain first came to Canada, or New France, as Frenchmen called it, in 1603. Like other explorers before him, he was searching for a passage through North America to China. He spent some time exploring the area around the St. Lawrence River and then sailed back to France. In 1608 he returned to New France. This time he came to stay and the following year he built a trading settlement called Quebec on the St. Lawrence.

After he built Quebec he continued exploring and extending trade with the Algonkin tribes around the St. Lawrence and with the Hurons further west. He was soon drawn into a war between the Indians in Canada and the Iroquois in New York. Champlain and his men killed a few Iroquois with their muskets near Lake Champlain. In time the French and Iroquois became enemies over the fur trade, not because of this action alone. They blocked all French attempts to trade or travel through New York. This is important because it meant that all Neuter contact with the

French came by way of the Hurons. And whatever Hurons said about the French, the Neuters believed, as we shall see later.

Brulé encouraged French and Indian trade

In order to encourage trading among Hurons and other Indians, Champlain sent young boys to live among some of them and learn their ways. Then these boys could advise the Indians in their trading with the French—to the benefit of the French, of course. The most famous of these young adventurers was Stephen Brulé whom we met earlier. Brulé went to live among the Indians at the age of sixteen and he was one of the best interpreters Champlain had.



This Iroquois woman is pounding roasted shelled corn into meal. The fire-hollowed log in the illustration is known as a mortar.

Brulé was one of the first white men the Neuters saw. His trip through Neuter territory in 1615 had been a mission to get the Susquehanna tribe to join in an attack on the Iroquois. Champlain himself never reached the Neuters. However it was he who named them Neuters because they remained at peace with their warring Huron and Iroquois neighbors. In Neuter bark houses Hurons and Iroquois could meet in peace. But once outside the village, the truce was at an end and Hurons and Iroquois would kill each other on sight. The Neuters never took sides in the Huron and Iroquois wars. They remained neutral.

Why did the Hurons trade with the French?

Their first contact with white men did not mean very much to the Neuters. Brulé had amazed them of course, and they talked

about him for months afterward. But they had few further contacts with white men for some years. Meanwhile, changes were taking place among their Huron neighbors to the north. And these changes meant trouble for the Neuters, for the story of the Neuters is tied closely to the story of the Hurons.

Very soon after Champlain founded Quebec, a big trade with the Hurons began. Goods the French had to trade were far better than things the Indians could make for themselves. French traders offered iron hatchets and knives in place of flint ones; kettles instead of clay pottery; and brandy, trinkets, and cloth which the Indians did not have. It was even possible with enough beaver pelts for the Hurons to buy a "thunder pole," their name for the white man's smooth-bore gun, or musket.



These hunters are using bows and arrows made of hickory wood. Arrows were tipped with flint which was bound to the shaft with sinew.

Hurons took to trading quickly. They grew only skimpy crops and found they could make a much better living by trading with the French. Hurons soon acted as middlemen between the French and other Indians. They traded fur to the French for blankets, axes, and other goods and then exchanged some of these goods with other Indians for more fur. Thus the Hurons rapidly built up a profitable trading business. The only trouble was that trading was so good that they began to give up hunting and fishing and what little farming they did. In time they forgot their old ways of living and when the older people died off many secrets about ways of hunting, fishing, and farming died with them.

Thus the Hurons came to depend upon trade to live. They did in fact become excellent traders but there was always a fear in the back of their minds. The nagging fear was that the French would stop trading with them. If the French ever started trading directly with the Neuters and other Indians further west, the Hurons might suffer extreme hardship. The Hurons knew this well and lived in constant fear. To protect the trading empire they had built, they carefully tried to keep Frenchmen from making direct contact with other Indians, especially the Neuters. Thus most French trading was carried on through the Huron middlemen.

How were the Hurons dependent upon the Neuters?

It happened that the Hurons had closer trading ties with the Neuters than any other Indians. Neuter lands produced great quantities of corn, beans, squash, tobacco, and hemp. Neuter forests teemed with beaver, deer, bear, and other animals. The Hurons depended upon the Neuters for their food supply, some of which, along with Neuter tobacco, they traded with western Indians for fur. Neuters paid a high price for the French goods they got from the Huron traders. But they had no contact with the French and believed that the Hurons charged them a fair price. The Neuters in fact believed everything Hurons told them about the French. This was to cause trouble later on.

To get a good idea of how carefully the Hurons guarded the Neuters from direct trade with the French we have only to look at their treatment of the early French missionaries to the Niagara region. Hurons were ready to have these priests murdered to keep them away from the Neuters.

The story of the missionaries begins with Stephen Brulé's second visit to the Niagara region in 1625. This time Brulé remained among the Neuters for several months and fully explored

their lands. He noted the fertile soil, the abundant animal life, and the marvelous waterways of the Niagara region. And if he missed seeing the great waterfalls of Niagara on his first trip in 1615, he surely saw them in 1625. The following spring Brulé returned to the Hurons.

What missionaries visited Niagara region?

Father Dallion came to Christianize the Neuters and open trade for the French Glowing reports from Brulé sent a Franciscan friar into the Neuter country some months later. The friar, Joseph Dallion, had done missionary work and taken part in the fur trade in Huron villages. Among the Neuters he wanted to start a mission and open direct trade between the tribe and the French. Dallion set out from his Huron mission with two other Frenchmen in the autumn of 1626. He and his companions tramped southward, pushing through the thick woods around the west end of Lake Ontario. After they crossed the Neuter frontier, Dallion's companions returned to the Huron mission.

The Neuters had a warm greeting for Father Dallion. Astonished crowds of naked Neuters surrounded him wherever he went and gave him squash, dried corn, and deer meat. His appearance amazed them even more than Brulé's had. Brulé had been dressed much like an Indian; Dallion wore long flowing grey robes. They watched him trace the sign of the cross in the air. And they grunted with delight when he gave them presents of shiny knives and gleaming trinkets. Charmed by the strange white man, the Neuters adopted him into their tribe and gave him a famous war chief for his Neuter father as was their custom.

But Dallion remained with his Neuter relatives for only three months. During this time he tramped from village to village, always promoting religion and trade. He found that Brulé's report had been accurate. The Neuter country was especially beautiful and fertile. Dallion was amazed at the frequent flights of ducks and passenger pigeons that blotted out the sun, and the many beaver that inhabited the streams. He wandered east of the Niagara River to a Neuter settlement near what is now Lewiston. Meanwhile, however, trouble was brewing for Father Dallion among the Hurons to the north.

Dallion's actions among the Neuters alarmed the Hurons. The Hurons, remember, depended upon Neuter farm goods to live. Huron traders exchanged Neuter food, tobacco, and hemp for beaver furs from western Indians. Then the Hurons exchanged the furs for French trade goods. As middlemen for the French, the

Hurons feared that Dallion would ruin their trade if he opened direct trade between the French and the Neuters.

So the Hurons decided to act. Bent upon ruining the friar, runners raced southward to Neuter territory. Upon reaching the Neuter villages, the runners squatted with painted chiefs in the smoky, firelit huts. They accused Dallion of being an evil magician and they swore that he poisoned the air in Huron villages, causing the death of many Huron children. They insisted that the friar intended to infect the Neuters in the same way. The Neuters believed the Hurons.

The story spread rapidly and the Neuters were terrified whenever the friar came near. When Dallion refused to leave, the frightened Neuters began mistreating him, hoping to drive him away. Finally a rumor that he had been murdered reached the Huron mission. A Frenchman set out to learn if the tale were true. He found Dallion and together they returned to the Huron mission where the Hurons greeted the friar with pleasure. At his Huron mission Dallion could not harm their trade.

Fathers Brébeuf and Chaumonot made a visit

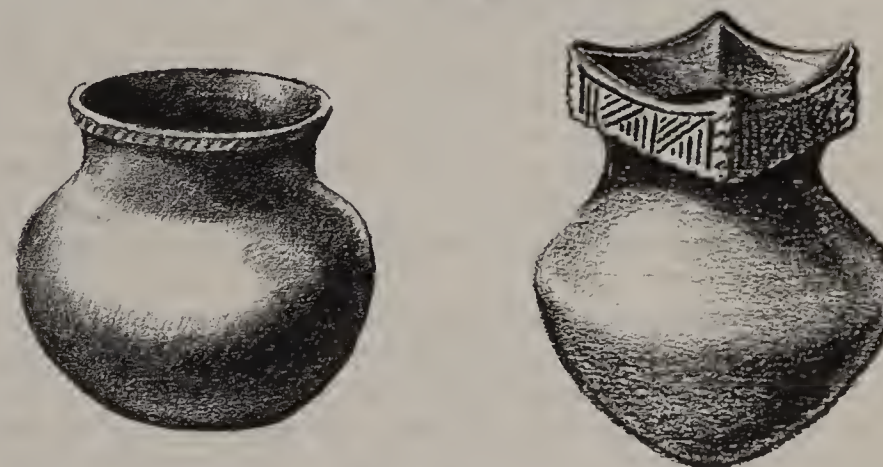
Fourteen years slipped away before French priests again went to Niagara country. This time it was the Jesuits Jean de Brébeuf and Joseph Chaumonot who appeared in the Neuter villages. Brébeuf was a nobleman, tall and strong and with the bearing of a soldier. His companion, Chaumonot, was of humble birth and was far less vigorous. Both men shared a deep need to plant the faith among the natives in New France. In the end Brébeuf met torture and death in a Huron town. After his death he was awarded sainthood by the Catholic Church.

Brébeuf and Chaumonot were experienced in the ways of Indians. In the smoky, drafty, flea-infested bark houses of the Hurons, the Jesuits helped the sick, taught religion, and baptized the Indians. They studied Huron, a language like Neuter. Both men spoke good Huron. Brébeuf wrote a book about the Huron language and Chaumonot wrote a Huron grammar and dictionary.

The Jesuits' great adventure among the Neuters began in the autumn of 1640. On a cheerless November day Brébeuf and Chaumonot, armed with faith and hope, set out for Neuter villages in the Niagara region. The pair tramped southward. At St. Joseph, a Huron town, they found a guide to lead them to the Neuter land. The party continued southward through the leafless forest, making camp for the night when twilight came on. They ate their dried corn as they sat around the campfire. After the skimpy meal, Brébeuf

and Chaumonot read their prayer books by the firelight. Often they stopped reading and listened to the night sounds—wind whispering in the tree-tops, the movements of night creatures in the underbrush. In the morning they continued their journey. Finally on the sixth day the tired Jesuits stumbled into a Neuter village.

No warm welcome awaited Brébeuf and Chaumonot in the Neuter village. Once again the Neuters had been warned by the Hurons. Neuter chiefs and young men had hurriedly gathered and listened in terror as the Hurons lied **about the Jesuits, repeating the familiar tale of poison and disease that had ruined Friar Dallion in 1626.**



Indians used clay pots for cooking until white traders brought iron kettles.

Not content with this, the Hurons urged the Neuters to murder Brébeuf and Chaumonot. Hurons were afraid to kill the Jesuits themselves so they tried bribing the Neuters with French hatchets to act as killers. The bribe almost succeeded, for the Neuters nearly killed the Jesuits when they arrived in the Neuter villages. Only the action of old tribesmen, who feared French revenge, stopped the murder.

Brébeuf and Chaumonot remained in the Neuter country for four miserable months. They had escaped death for a time but the Neuters had agreed among themselves that no one should give them shelter or food. Hungry and cold, Brébeuf and Chaumonot wandered from village to village, finding every lodge shut against them. They took Neuter curses and blows wherever they went. Their ears rang with warnings that they would be put in the kettle and eaten if they remained in the Neuter country. Still, month after month the Jesuits stayed among the Indians. They trudged through the wintry forests, hoping for better treatment in the next village.

One night Brébeuf noticed a huge cross hanging in the sky in the direction of what is now New York. He believed that this was a sign from God so he and Chaumonot stumbled eastward and finally reached a river which many believe to be the Niagara River. Snow was falling and the gray river was choked with ice cakes sailing on the rapid current. But the Jesuits arrived safely on the opposite shore and tramped into a Neuter settlement, perhaps later called Onguiaahra (Ongiara).

Although Onguiaahra's population regarded the Jesuits with horror, a woman invited them into her lodge. She sheltered the pair for two weeks, fed them and helped in making a list of Neuter words. The woman convinced her relatives that the Jesuits meant no harm but she could not quiet the fears of the rest of the village. At last Brébeuf and Chaumonot admitted defeat. They bade the kind woman farewell and crossed the Niagara River in gloomy February, disappearing in a swirl of snowflakes in the direction of their Huron mission. Again the sly Hurons had won, for the French and the Neuters had been kept apart. The Huron trade was safe.

The Huron treatment of the French missionaries gives us a good picture of how Huron life had changed. The Hurons had become a nation of traders. They depended upon the Neuters to supply them with food in exchange for French goods. Since trade had become a matter of life and death for them, it is easy to see why the Hurons acted as they did toward the French priests.

Women lost their importance and the life of the longhouse people changes

There is another aspect of trading that is often over-looked in the story of how trading changed Indian life. And strangely, few white traders or Hurons or Neuters or Iroquois understood it. European traders who paddled and portaged the wilderness came from a culture in which men ruled and owned property and women had few legal rights. This idea was so much a part of them that Europeans did not think about it. And wherever their paddles dipped into wilderness waters or wherever their feet pressed woodland trails, they carried the idea that men ruled and owned property.

So when they squatted around campfires and exchanged guns, blankets, kettles, axes, and beads for furs, they would trade only with the men. When land was bought, white traders insisted on buying it from the men, even though it was controlled by the women. When trade rights were bargained, Europeans bargained with the men. This gave the men a new importance in Indian life and reduced the importance of women.

Indian life, with its strict laws about the rights of men and women, began to change. The clans declined as the importance of women declined, especially the role of the clan matron. And the clan longhouse with its related families began to disappear. Indians began building single-family log cabins in which the father replaced the mother as the head of the family. When the longhouse passed, so did the Indian's old way of living.

Trade, then, was the thing that changed Indian ways of living. And in the end it destroyed them, as we shall see. In the East some of the powerful Five Nations were becoming dependent upon Dutch goods. Soon the growing competition for beaver skins would lead to a great war between the Hurons and the Iroquois. The Neuters too would be destroyed. And finally the Iroquois would emerge as one of the most powerful Indian confederacies in all of North America. But this is a story for the next chapter.



Trotting at a steady pace, this Indian runner bears a wampum belt. News of the appointment of a new chief was sent to other tribes in the confederacy in this manner.

2. The Iroquois defeat their enemies

This chapter tells how the Iroquois became dependent upon Dutch goods, how they killed off the beaver in New York to get trade goods, and how they fought wars with the Hurons and other Indians for control of the western fur trade. As a result of these wars Niagara became an outpost of the Iroquois empire.

Struggle for control of the fur trade leads to war

What brought the war?

Iroquois became dependent upon Dutch trade goods In the last chapter we saw how French traders changed Indian life, particularly that of the Hurons. The French, however, were not the only white traders. Nor were the Hurons the only Indians dependent upon the white man's goods. Far to the east of Niagara country, the Iroquois were fast becoming dependent upon Dutch trade goods. Iroquois life, like that of the Hurons, was changed by white trade goods. This was one of the causes of the Iroquois Wars, as we shall see.

The Dutch and the Iroquois started trading in a small way in 1609 when Henry Hudson sailed up the Hudson River. In 1614 the Dutch built a trading center near Albany. But it was not until the Dutch raised Fort Orange (Albany) in 1624 that a steady trade developed. The Dutch made trade agreements with the Iroquois tribes west of Fort Orange, particularly with the nearby Mohawks.

From the very beginning the Iroquois eagerly traded beaver pelts for trinkets, kettles, axes, knives, rum and brandy, muskets, powder, and lead. These things were better than those they could make. Almost overnight the Indians became dependent upon these trade goods. And when this happened Iroquois life changed. Then the Iroquois found themselves in the same situation as the Hurons. For they stopped making tools and weapons of their own and began forgetting their old ways of living. In the end the Iroquois had to have Dutch trade goods.

Beaver disappeared So important did this trade with the Dutch become that it nearly ruined the League of the Iroquois. The Mohawks, who were nearest to the Dutch at Fort Orange, did most of the trading. They acted as middlemen for the other Iroquois tribes and charged them high prices for Dutch goods. The angry Onondagas began talking war to break the hold the

Mohawks had on the Dutch trade. But war never came because the beaver disappeared in the Iroquois country first. By 1640 all the Iroquois tribes faced the problem of finding furs to buy Dutch goods. Disappearance of the beaver in New York, then, was another cause of the Iroquois Wars.



Dutch encouraged the Iroquois to fight the Hurons The end of Iroquois beaver was also a blow to the Dutch. Trade was the lifeblood of the Dutch settlements in New York just as it was for the French in Canada. Once Iroquois beavers were trapped out, the Dutch traders faced ruin. So the Dutch began looking northward to Canada where the Hurons had built up a great trading empire. The Dutch wanted the fur that the Hurons shipped to the French settlements on the St. Lawrence every year.

But the Dutch could not trade with the Hurons in spite of the many furs the Hurons had. The Iroquois and the French stood in the way. Two thousand Iroquois warriors stood between the Dutch and the Hurons. The Iroquois were ready to fight to stop Dutch trade with the Hurons because this would mean hard times for the Iroquois. The Dutch also had to worry about French traders who were also ready to fight to stop the Dutch from taking over their trade with the Hurons. The Dutch saw that they could get furs only through the Iroquois or not at all—and then only by war.

Dutch traders saw the problem clearly. Either they armed the Iroquois so that the Iroquois could destroy the Hurons and take over their trade or the Dutch trade would be ruined. So the Dutch began supplying the Iroquois with muskets. The number of guns the Iroquois used in the Iroquois Wars is not known exactly. Several years after the wars began, the Dutch said they had sold four hundred guns to the Iroquois. This number armed one warrior in four. But the Indians took poor care of firearms and many guns would not fire. The bow and arrow was, of course, an important weapon in the Iroquois Wars. Nevertheless, Dutch muskets helped tip the scales in favor of the Iroquois.

There is another cause of the Iroquois Wars that we should remember. The Iroquois Wars were more than a series of struggles among Indian tribes. Behind the Indians stood white traders. Rival Dutch and French trading companies fought for control of the fur trade using Indians to do most of the fighting. The Dutch and the Iroquois tried to take over the Huron and French trade and of course the Hurons and the French put up a fight.

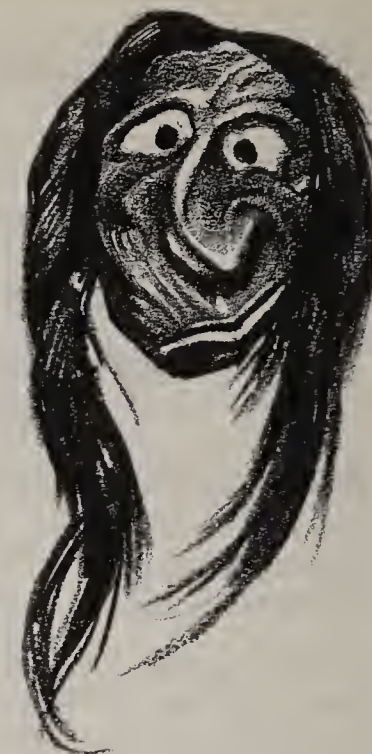
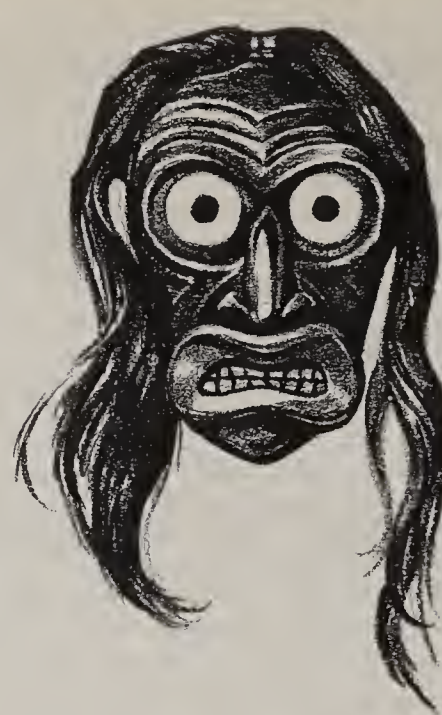
Thus by 1641 conditions were ripe for war. The Indians had become dependent upon white trade goods. The beaver in New York had been killed off, and the Iroquois, egged on by the Dutch, were ready to start moving west and north to take away the fur trade from the French and Hurons. The Dutch had armed the Iroquois with muskets. And the French and the Hurons stood ready to fight any attempt by the Dutch and the Iroquois to take over the trade with western Indians.

The Iroquois wipe out the Hurons

What were the principal events of the war?

Indian warfare changed

Before white traders arrived, an Indian "war" was usually a small though bloody raid. After an attack on an enemy village, Indians boasted of their bravery and tortured and burned some captives at the stake. A few scalps remained to flutter in front of bark lodges in the home village. But Indian warfare changed when Indians began to fight for the fur trade—a trade their lives depended upon. Trade wars killed off whole tribes and wiped out entire Indian nations. This is the kind of war that the Iroquois and Hurons were to fight in the 1640's.



These wooden masks were worn by the False Face society on certain occasions. Masks were carved from basswood and then rubbed with grease to make them gleam.

Huron fur fleets on the Ottawa River were raided

In 1641 the Iroquois, pushed on by the Dutch, sent war parties northward to Canada. Iroquois war parties appeared on the Ottawa River which was the main Huron trade route to French settlements on the St. Lawrence. The Iroquois warriors raided Huron fur fleets moving eastward along the Ottawa and stole Huron furs. The raids increased in the years that followed because the Iroquois and the Dutch never could get all the furs they needed. By 1644 the Iroquois raiders had almost closed the Ottawa River to the Huron traders.

However, a final all-out war was put off for a while. The Hurons wanted to avoid it and in 1645 they arranged a peace treaty with the Iroquois at a French town on the St. Lawrence. The Hurons agreed to give the Iroquois a yearly shipment of furs if the Iroquois would stop raiding fur shipments on the Ottawa River. In 1646 the greatest Huron fur fleet in the history of Canada appeared on the St. Lawrence. But the Hurons broke their word. Not one Huron pelt was delivered to an Iroquois village. And the angry Iroquois now prepared to wipe out the Hurons.

Rumors of war first reached the Huron towns in the autumn of 1646. But the Hurons did not get excited. Peace had brought prosperity. They had had a good year in 1645, and in 1646 they had their best trading year ever. A disease had finally disappeared from the land and the Hurons had trade goods and food piled high in their bark houses. War and ruin seemed far away. The worst the Hurons expected was a new Iroquois blockade of the Ottawa River. No Huron could have imagined the destruction that was soon to sweep his nation away.

In 1647 Iroquois war parties again hid along the banks of the Ottawa ready to steal furs going to the French settlements. The Hurons had enough French trade goods from the year before, however, so they simply stayed at home in 1647. But it was a different story the following year. By 1648 the Hurons needed more French goods and decided to run the Iroquois blockade of the Ottawa at any cost.

In the summer of 1648 a big Huron fur fleet set out for a French settlement on the St. Lawrence. A big war party protected the fleet as it moved down the Ottawa. All went well until the fur fleet reached its destination. Then Mohawks suddenly darted from the forest edging the river. A short and hot fight followed. Hurons and Mohawks screamed war cries and showers of arrows and bullets whistled through the air. The Hurons defeated the Mohawks and later went back up the Ottawa with scalps and prisoners and the needed trade goods.

The Senecas burned St. Joseph

While the Mohawks and Hurons fought on the banks of the St. Lawrence, the Senecas struck savagely at the Huron frontier town of St. Joseph. The attack came on a warm day in July, 1648 as the peaceful town went about its daily tasks. Scarcely a warrior was to be seen. Most of them had gone with the trading party to the St. Lawrence and on that July day St. Joseph's population was mostly women, children, and old men. Many of these had gathered in the Huron church to hear their priest say mass.

The priest had just finished the mass when he heard the town take up the cry "Iroquois! Iroquois!". War whoops joined the cries and swarms of Senecas swept into the town. The terrified people scattered in every direction but few escaped Seneca hatchets or capture. St. Joseph disappeared in flames that day and the priest and many Hurons with it. The Senecas killed the priest with a volley of arrows and bullets, and then hacked his body to pieces and smeared his blood on their faces to increase their bravery. His remains they flung into his blazing church.

After attacking and burning a smaller town nearby, the triumphant Senecas herded hundreds of Huron prisoners back to New York. Many Huron captives fell beneath tomahawk and knife on the march to the south. Those who reached New York were adopted or died at stakes in the Iroquois villages. The destruction of St. Joseph frightened the whole Huron nation. But the worst was still to come.

St. Ignace and St. Louis fell to the Iroquois

The autumn of 1648 saw a thousand Seneca and Mohawk warriors gather in New York for an invasion of the Huron land. This army moved northward and spent the winter hunting on the Huron frontier in Ontario. When spring came the warriors pushed towards the Huron towns. The year before the Iroquois had left St. Joseph in ashes so the path into Huron territory now lay open and unprotected. They passed the Huron frontier unseen.

Early one March morning the Seneca and Mohawk warriors moved in on the town of St. Ignace. The people of the town slept peacefully, never dreaming the Iroquois were in the nearby forest. As they slept, the invaders slipped silently through the slushy snow that still lay upon the ground and passed through the unguarded gates into the town. Only three of the four hundred people of St. Ignace escaped the swift dawn attack that followed. They fled to St. Louis, a nearby town, carrying the alarm.

The Iroquois left a rear guard at St. Ignace to hold the town and the rest of them set off at a trot for St. Louis. They fell upon the town before the sun was up. The Hurons in St. Louis put up a desperate fight for their lives. But they could not match Iroquois fierceness and Dutch guns. In the end the Iroquois fired the town. They burned many Hurons alive in their blazing bark houses and then herded the rest to St. Ignace. Among the captives tramped Jean Brébeuf, the priest who had failed to Christianize the Neuters in 1640. At St. Ignace the Iroquois tortured Brébeuf for hours before he finally died.

The Iroquois now got ready to smash at the town of St. Marie. But before they could launch the attack, a Huron war party hit St. Louis, then held by a small Iroquois force. Fighting raged far into the night and for a time the Hurons held the edge. They killed one hundred Iroquois warriors, using bows and arrows, hatchets, war clubs, and knives. But Dutch guns and Iroquois reinforcements from St. Ignace finally decided the outcome of the battle. When it was over, only twenty badly wounded Hurons remained alive.

The fierce fight the Hurons put up at St. Louis frightened the Iroquois chiefs and warriors. The Iroquois army was deep in densely populated enemy territory. Besides, the invading army had lost two hundred warriors since the fighting had begun at St. Ignace. The Iroquois now decided to retreat with the plunder and prisoners that had been taken. The Iroquois bound in their cabins those Hurons who were unable to march and then set the cabins afire. Several hundred Huron warriors chased the retreating Iroquois army to the Huron frontier, but the Hurons avoided battle and the Iroquois escaped to New York.

Ten thousand Hurons died on Christian Island

The sudden appearance of this large Iroquois army in Huron land shook the entire Huron Nation. In town after town the people were terrified. They thought only of escaping a new Iroquois invasion. Fear drove them to abandon and burn fifteen towns and flee in all directions. Many Hurons ran into the woods or sought safety among the Neuters and other tribes. Some surrendered to the enemy. One entire Huron town migrated to New York and accepted adoption into the five Iroquois tribes. Within two weeks after the disasters at St. Ignace and St. Louis, the Huron country had been laid waste by the Hurons themselves.

A large part of the Huron Nation, along with priests and French soldiers, fled to Christian Island in nearby Georgian Bay. The French soldiers raised a fort on the island and the Hurons built bark lodges near the fort. The Iroquois soon followed. But the Hurons felt safe because the soldiers kept the Iroquois from invading the island. The Iroquois, however, remained close by, camping on the mainland. A paddle to the mainland meant sudden death for the Hurons. Christian Island was now a prison. It would soon become a place of horror and death.

Forced to remain on their island prison, the Hurons slowly starved to death. Before winter came in 1649, the trapped Hurons on Christian Island were hungry. All that year fish and game had been scarce. Some smoked fish the priests had purchased from Algonkin Indians had not lasted long. Then a corn crop planted on the island failed and hungry Huron men, women, and children combed the island's woods collecting acorns. Sometime during the winter of 1649-50, hunger-crazed Hurons began practising cannibalism. A deadly disease soon broke out and added to the horror. Disease and starvation wiped out hundreds every week. By spring, 1650, ten thousand Hurons had died.

A band of Hurons escaped Christian Island in the summer of 1650. These Hurons retreated to the St. Lawrence and remained in eastern Canada. Their descendants still live at Lorette, near Quebec. Lorette's Hurons are the only Indians that still have the Huron name. Thus a mighty nation of thirty thousand people disappeared from the land north of Lake Ontario.



The Iroquois turn on the Neuters

What besides loss of fur trade worried the Iroquois?

The Iroquois had fought the Hurons to win the western fur trade. But even with the Hurons destroyed, new dangers threatened the Iroquois. The French stood ready to make trade agreements with the Neuters as they had earlier with the Hurons. The Iroquois decided to destroy the Neuters to keep this from happening. There was also another reason why the Iroquois decided to destroy the Neuters. The Iroquois feared that the Neuters would join the Susquehanna Indians and invade Iroquois territory. The Neuters had many warriors and the Susquehanna were armed with muskets and cannons supplied by Swedish traders. A Neuter and Susquehanna attack was only a matter of time. So the Seneca and Mohawk chiefs planned to strike first.

What happened to the Neuters?

In the autumn of 1650 a wave of fifteen hundred Iroquois stormed across the Genesee River and swept away a Neuter town of several thousand people in a lightning attack. Again hundreds of prisoners streamed into Iroquois territory—this time Neuters instead of Hurons. Angry Neuters struck back and killed and scalped two hundred Senecas in a frontier village near the Genesee. Then as winter came on, an uneasy silence spread through the forests between the Niagara and Genesee rivers. But it was only the calm before the final storm. In the spring of 1651 twelve hundred Iroquois plunged across the Genesee frontier in a second invasion of Niagara country. Another Neuter town was overrun and the Neuters stopped fighting. The fate of the Hurons overtook the Neuters now fleeing in wild panic before the Iroquois. Neuters died by the thousands of starvation and disease. Some accepted Iroquois adoption as the Hurons had. The Neuter Nation was no more. Niagara County was taken over by the Senecas and became an outpost of the Iroquois.

Although they disappeared as a tribe, the Neuters left important reminders in Niagara country. A large Neuter village once stood on the present site of Lewiston, New York. This village, which some call Onguiaahra, or Ongiara, was overwhelmed in the wave of destruction that followed the Iroquois attack on the Neuters. Ongiara never arose from its ashes but its name was not lost. The name Ongiara was changed to Niagara and given to the mighty river, the great waterfall, the land around the river, and to twin cities, one in Canada and the other in New York.

The Iroquois Wars did not end with the destruction of the Hurons and Neuters. The French made trade agreements with western tribes and stopped the Iroquois from rebuilding the old Huron trading empire. This kept the struggle between the French and the Iroquois for control of the fur trade going for many years. During this time the Iroquois had to fight for the furs they got. The need for furs forced them to carry the hatchet to tribes as far west as the Mississippi.

Meanwhile, the English conquered the Dutch and took over Fort Orange, renaming it Albany. Although the Iroquois continued to bring in furs, the English and Dutch in Albany decided to trade directly with the western tribes. In 1685 traders from Albany started seeking furs in the west. The invasion of the Albany traders forced the French to take over at Niagara. In the next chapter we shall read how the Niagara region finally became an outpost of the French Empire.



Indians wrapped themselves from head to foot in shaggy robes cut from animal skins. The animal's skull was often left in the hide and, when the robe was worn, the jaws and teeth stood out over a warrior's head, giving him a very impressive appearance.

EXPLORATIONS IN NIAGARA REGION

1615 - 1685



Your History Workshop

Words and terms you should know

wampum	missionary	hordes
confederacy	Jesuit	clan
festival	blockade	longhouse
middleman	stockade	

Where is it on the map?

Alaska	St. Ignace	Ottawa River
Bering Strait	St. Louis	Genesee River
St. Joseph	Georgian Bay	Christian Island

Who's Who in history?

Stephen (Étienne) Brulé	Jean de Brébeuf	Samuel de Champlain
Joseph Dallion	Joseph Chaumonot	Hiawatha

How carefully did you read?

1. Identify the phrase "Three Sisters".
2. The Corn Festival was an annual affair. What was its purpose?
3. What Indian tribes joined the League of Iroquois?
4. What is an Indian name for Niagara?
5. What is the origin of American Indians? Along what route did they migrate?
6. Explain the part played by clans in Iroquoian life.
7. Explain why the culture of the longhouse people was based on the importance of women.
8. How did Iroquois Indians earn a living before the white man came?
9. The Hurons had a vast system of trade. With whom did they trade? What goods were exchanged?
10. The first white men to visit Neuter country were French priests. Their visit alarmed the Hurons. Why?
11. How did the Hurons turn the Neuters against the priests? Why were the Neuters ready to believe the Hurons?
12. How did European traders destroy the importance of women and so change Indian culture?
13. The Iroquois waged all out war on the Hurons in the middle of the seventeenth century. Why?
14. What were the results of the Iroquois-Huron War?

Activities to help you understand Part I

1. Locate a good-sized map of the United States and southern Canada. Center a standard sheet of white tracing paper (8½ x 11) over the Great Lakes Region. Trace this region of the map. Then fill in this outline map as follows:

- a. Label the Great Lakes, Georgian Bay, Christian Island, and St. Ignace.
 - b. Trace the course of the Genesee and Ottawa rivers.
 - c. Make a legend for the map using symbols to represent the Five Nations, Hurons, and Neuters. Use symbols to locate each of the tribes. Pages 10 and 12 in your *New York State Atlas* will help with the location of the tribes.
2. Pretend you are a French soldier on Christian Island living with the Huron survivors of the Seventeenth Century Wars. Write a letter to a friend in Montreal describing horror of life on the island.
 3. Start a dictionary of new words and phrases used in each unit.
 4. Make a model of an Iroquois village. It will help to search the library for sources containing pictures and drawings of long-houses and stockaded villages.
 5. Imagine that your class has visited the home of an Iroquois boy in New York in 1625. Discuss the difference between his home and ways of living and yours.
 6. Resolved, that the Iroquois were justified in warring upon the Hurons and Neuters. (Debate)
 7. Read Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*. Make an oral report of the poem to the class. Or ask your teacher to read passages appropriate to the formation of the league of peace. Discuss the selections to be sure they are understood; then dramatize them by pantomiming the happenings covered.
 8. Make a list of the chief steps leading to control of New York by the Iroquois. Plan to present this information to the class using maps and the blackboard.
 9. You are a chief at a council fire urging all Iroquois tribes to unite in the League of Iroquois. Prepare this speech to deliver to your classmates.
 10. Start a timeline to which you can add events as the year's study progresses. Decide with your teacher where to place it in the classroom. Then figure out, in terms of available space, how the years are to be laid off on the line. You might want to consider whether pictures and drawings would be appropriate to illustrate events.
 11. Choose a man mentioned in Part I and do research about him. Write an account of one of his achievements not mentioned in *Outpost of Empires: Niagara County*.
 12. Act out a series of scenes mentioned in the textbook, for example, the reaction of the Mohawks to Champlain's "thunder-pole" and the meeting between Father Joseph Dallion and the Neuters.

13. Write a series of newspaper headlines to describe the events in Part I. Read these to the class to get its opinion, then post the best ones on the bulletin board.
14. Suggest to your teacher and classmates that standing committees be formed to handle different review functions in each unit. One group, for example, could keep a dictionary of new words and terms, another keep up the timeline, and a third make flashcards of people, events, and dates.
15. From the list of books at the end of this section, choose one that interests you the most. Read it and prepare a written report which includes:
 - a. The title and author
 - b. Time and place of story
 - c. Subject of the book
 - d. The most important character(s)
 - e. What part you enjoyed most
 - f. Your opinion of the book
16. Plan a "Who am I" quiz. On separate slips of paper write the names of persons and groups mentioned in Part I. Ask classmates to draw them from a container. Beneath each name request that they write four statements about the person or group. The first statement should be general so it applies to almost all the names, the second should apply to fewer names, the third only to a couple, and the fourth to just one person or group. Each pupil should read his set of statements to the class. The winner of the quiz is the pupil guessing the largest number of names.
17. How many blanks can you fill in correctly? On a separate sheet of paper list your answers to correspond with the numbers below.

American Indians came from (1) _____. They traveled across the (2) _____ to Alaska, North America. Among them were the ancestors of the Hurons who settled north of Lake (3) _____, the (4) _____ who made the land around the Niagara River their home, and the (5) _____ who located in what is now New York State. After many thousands of years, (6) _____ (number) Iroquois tribes banded together in a league of peace called the (7) _____. Later the (8) _____ Indians joined the league. These tribes lived in bark houses called (9) _____ in which the leader of the clan was a (10) _____. The peaceful life of all Niagara County Indians came to an end because their way of life changed—they learned to live by (11) _____.

Books with exciting stories

- Richards, Atlas of New York State.*
Beauchamp, William, Iroquois Folklore. Grades 7-12.
Bleeker, Sonia, Indians of the Longhouse. Grades 4-6.
Bunce, William H., Son of the Iroquois. The story of an Iroquois boy. Grades 6-9.
Cornplanter, Jesse, Legends of the Longhouse. Grades 5-12.
Crownfield, Gertrude, Alison Blair. Life of an English girl during the Indian wars. Grades 5-9.
 _____, *Joscelyn of the Forts.* Story of the Indian wars. Grades 5-9.
Edmonds, Walter D., Matchlock Gun. A prize-winning account of a colonial boy's life. Grades 4-6.
Holland, R. S., Blue Heron's Feather. Story of a boy among Indians. Grades 6-9.
Laring, Mary E., The Hero of the Longhouse. Story of Hiawatha and the Iroquois. Grades 5-9.
Powers, Mable, Around an Iroquois Campfire. Indian stories. Grades 5-9.

THE FLAGS OF THREE NATIONS FLY OVER NIAGARA COUNTY

Part II

3. The Niagara Region becomes an outpost of France
4. Britain loses the Niagara region to the United States

3. *Niagara Region becomes an Outpost of France*

France stakes a claim

After 1650, things quieted down for a while at Niagara. The Senecas, of course, now controlled the land that had belonged to the Neuters. And although they raised no villages at Niagara they jealously guarded it from other Indians and especially from the French. The Senecas did this mainly because Niagara was the key to the western fur trade which they wanted for themselves. The French wanted Niagara for the same reason. In the end they pushed in and made Niagara an outpost of France. The mighty Senecas then became their servants, working like pack animals on the portage. All this did not happen overnight, however. It took many years before Frenchmen finally became the masters of Niagara County. This chapter tells the story of how it happened.

What type of man was La Salle?

Fifteen years after the Iroquois pushed the Neuters out, a great French explorer paddled by Niagara County. His name was Robert Cavelier but he is best known as La Salle, a name he took from an estate his family owned near his birthplace, the French city of Rouen. La Salle's rich father wanted him to become a priest and he was educated to be a Jesuit, a very strict religious order. But La Salle was restless and ambitious and unwilling to bow to any man or group of men. And so he gave up his religious career. In 1666, when he was twenty-three years old, he sailed to New France to make his fortune.

When he arrived in New France, La Salle settled on the banks of the St. Lawrence near Montreal. He remained here in the wilderness for three years, trading with Indians for a living. From the beginning he had a way with most Indians he met. He won their respect by learning to speak and understand Indian languages, and by treating Indians fairly when they came to trade their furs. Because of this he prospered. In time he would probably have become a wealthy man.

But his restlessness would never let him stay in any one place. The Indians he traded with had fired his imagination. They spoke about a great river southeast of the Niagara region that flowed into the sea. He believed it was the western passage to the Orient that explorers had looked for since the days of Columbus. He made

up his mind to find and explore the river to its mouth. He sold his land on the St. Lawrence to raise money for his exploration.

In July, 1669, La Salle went up the St. Lawrence with a party of French and Indians. He reached Lake Ontario the next month and then followed the southern shore towards Niagara. Near what is now the city of Rochester, New York, he met a band of Senecas and went with them to their village. There he hoped to find someone to show him the way to the great river.

At the village all the Senecas turned out to welcome the Frenchmen. They gave a great feast in honor of La Salle. But they would not give him the guide he needed. They tried to discourage him from pushing West. The Senecas, remember, depended upon the fur trade. They saw La Salle not as an explorer but as a rival trader. And they feared he might take over the western fur trade. La Salle would not listen. He was determined to find and explore the great river. This made the Senecas angry and they began to mistreat the French.

Finally La Salle parted with the Senecas. He and his party paddled west along Lake Ontario and in September, 1669, passed the mouth of the Niagara River. Here faint sounds of distant rapids and waterfalls reached their ears. But La Salle was more interested in the treeless point of land at the mouth of the river. He marked it as a natural spot for a fort. In a village at the lake's west end he found a guide. But here most of his men turned back to the St. Lawrence. La Salle, however, pushed on, searching for the great river.

The year 1669 was La Salle's first visit to Niagara. He had come seeking a passage to the Orient. He failed to find it, of course. Many people in Canada laughed at him and called him an idle dreamer. But his spirit was not crushed. After he gave up his search he decided upon a new project. He would build an empire for France in the West. As it turned out, he also failed in this plan. But it was this plan that brought him back to Niagara County in 1678.

How did La Salle hope to win Niagara for France?

La Salle's great idea was to build a string of trading settlements along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, with forts to protect the settlements. The most important link in this chain of forts was Niagara. Any trade passing from the Mississippi and Ohio to the St. Lawrence had to pass through Niagara. Thus a fort at the mouth of the Niagara River would put the fur trade of the West in his hands.



An Iroquois war party attacking Huron fur traders on the Ottawa River in the 1640's. Notice that the Hurons are not armed with muskets. This helps to explain their later destruction as a nation.

The *Griffon* was built for exploring and trading in the Upper Great Lakes Region

Part of his plan was to put a sailing vessel on the Upper Great Lakes to use in his explorations and trade. The best place to build such a ship was up river from Niagara Falls. Here a ship could load and unload goods close by the portage which would connect French traders on the St. Lawrence with western Indians.

In 1678 La Salle set in motion his plans for a ship and fort in the Niagara area. That November he sent a small vessel to Niagara with carpenters, blacksmiths, and other workers under the command of Dominick La Motte. These men were to build his sailing vessel, the *Griffon*, on the river bank above the falls. Father Louis Hennepin, a Catholic priest, was also a member of La Motte's party. Father Hennepin later wrote two books describing his adventures in North America and he gives us the first eye-witness account of the falls.

It was early in December before La Motte, Father Hennepin, and the rest of this advance party reached the Niagara River. They sailed and towed their small vessel up river to the foot of the rapids at the present site of Lewiston. Here they cut trees down and in three days raised a house surrounded with a stockade. The ground was frozen and they had to pour boiling water on it to dig holes for the stockade. This dwelling was the earliest raised by white men on the Niagara River.

Meanwhile, La Salle had been outfitting another supply ship on the St. Lawrence. On Christmas Eve, 1678, he set sail to join La Motte's party at Lewiston. The ship's hold was crammed with supplies needed for building the *Griffon*. With La Salle was his friend Henry Tonty, an Italian soldier. Tonty had lost his right hand in a battle in Europe some years before. He had replaced it with one made of metal. Indians soon nicknamed him "Iron Hand."

The wind failed as La Salle and Tonty neared Niagara. As usual, La Salle was impatient and he and Tonty went ashore to walk the rest of the way. As they tramped westward, the pilot and the crew left the vessel riding at anchor and went ashore to sleep. A sudden squall came up and the ship was wrecked on the shore. The loss of this ship was a blow to La Salle because most of the things he needed for his *Griffon* disappeared in the waters of Lake Ontario.

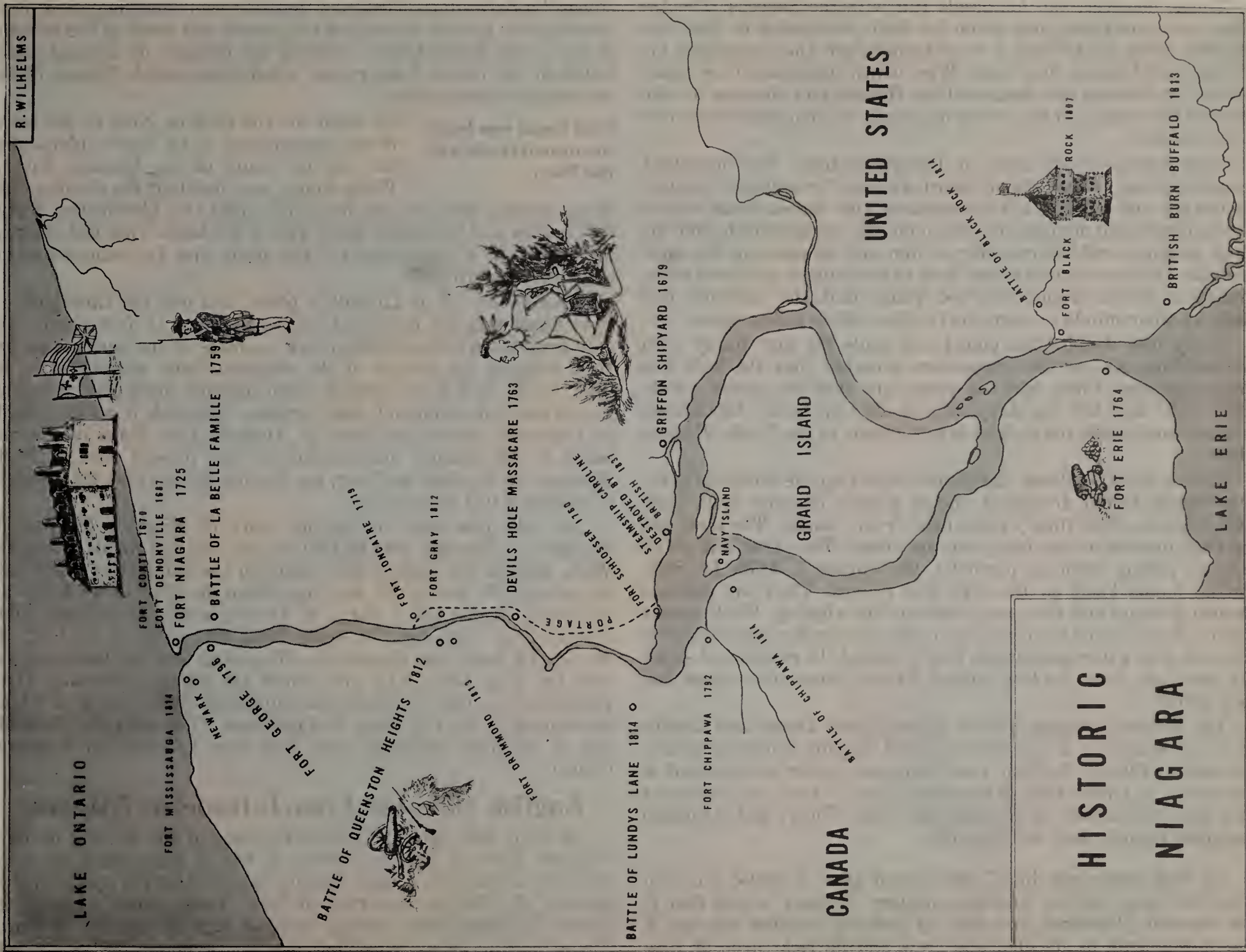
Upon reaching La Motte's storehouse, La Salle did not waste any time looking for a place to build the *Griffon*. Hennepin had already scouted the area and reported to La Salle. While Tonty re-

mained at the storehouse, La Salle climbed Lewiston Hill and followed the portage to the upper river. A few miles above the falls he came upon the narrow channel that separates Cayuga Island from the mainland. This he decided was to be the shipyard of the *Griffon*.

It did not take axmen long to clear the trees from the site. Soon log and bark huts and a chapel rose on the bank of the Little Niagara River opposite Cayuga Island. On January 26, 1679, carpenters laid the keel of the *Griffon*. But trouble was in the wind. In the weeks that followed, cold and hunger made the workers grumble and threaten mutiny. La Salle was not at the shipyard while this was going on. A week after the keel had been laid he tramped off to the St. Lawrence for more supplies. He left the faithful Tonty in command. Tonty somehow kept the men working and in spite of the cold, hunger, and lack of materials, the *Griffon's* hull slowly took shape.



La Salle's men building the Griffon on the Little Niagara River in 1679.



Tonty, however, had his hands full with the Senecas. The Indians were sorry they had given La Salle permission to build his *Griffon*. After all he was a rival trader, and they saw that his *Griffon* would collect furs in the West which they needed for themselves. The Senecas had destroyed the Hurons and Neuters for the western fur trade and they were not ready to turn that trade over to the French.

Most warriors were away on the winter hunt. But those that remained hung around the shipyard waiting for a chance to burn the *Griffon* and perhaps kill the workers. One Seneca made believe he was drunk and actually did try to murder a blacksmith. But the smith swung a red-hot iron bar at him and he gave up the idea. Then the Indians refused to sell food to the hungry shipyard crew. Finally a Seneca woman warned Tonty that the warriors had made up their minds to burn the *Griffon* within a few days.

Tonty now doubled the guard and made the men hurry with the building. At last the carpenters reported that the hull was watertight and Tonty had the vessel put into the water (May, 1679). The men left the shipyard and lived on board. Carpenters finished work while the *Griffon* lay at anchor in the Little Niagara River.

Once it was completed, the *Griffon* sailed up the Niagara River near Squaw Island. It was at anchor a short distance from Lake Erie when La Salle finally came back from Canada. The crew put the final touches on the forty-five ton vessel. They even had small cannons poking from its portholes. On August 7, 1679, La Salle and all hands knelt on the deck and prayed. Then the cannons boomed a salute and the men raced into the rigging. While twelve men on shore hauled the boat with ropes, the *Griffon* spread canvas and, aided by a northeast wind, finally passed the rapids and sailed out into Lake Erie. Its bow pushed waters where only canoes had been before.

The *Griffon's* voyage on the Upper Great Lakes was trouble from the beginning. Fierce storms tossed the ship about and nearly wrecked it. Finally the little vessel dropped anchor at an island at the mouth of Green Bay, Wisconsin. There it took on a cargo of furs and set sail back to Niagara. La Salle, Tonty, and Hennepin remained behind. And well they did.

La Salle never saw his *Griffon* again after it sailed out into Lake Michigan. Its fate is still a mystery. A story is told that it was boarded, plundered, and sunk by Indians. Another tale has it that it was sunk by its pilot and crew and its rich cargo of furs

stolen. La Salle himself believed that this was what happened. But probably the *Griffon* foundered in a storm and went to the bottom of one of the Great Lakes. Recently the remains of a vessel were found in the Upper Lake region which some people believe to be the long-lost French ship.

Fort Conti was built to control trade with the West

So much for the *Griffon*. Now to get back to the second part of La Salle's plan—the fort at the mouth of the Niagara River. While Tonty was building the *Griffon*, La Motte started work on the fort. He raised two blockhouses forty feet square and connected them with a stockade. This fort, Conti, also served as a storehouse for the goods that La Salle hoped to trade for western furs.

Like almost all of La Salle's plans, this one fell through too. Fort Conti was not destroyed by the Senecas. In fact no soldier ever fired at an enemy through the loopholes in the blockhouses or from between the pickets of the stockade. Some months after it was raised, Fort Conti burned down because somebody, probably the sergeant in command, was careless. Although it never played an important part in the story of Niagara, Fort Conti is remembered as the earliest fortification on the present site of Fort Niagara. As we shall see later, the French did not give up the idea of raising a fort on this site.

La Salle now steps out of our story of Niagara. He passed through the Niagara area in 1680 on his way to Canada from the West. And he did appear here again in the summer of 1681 but not to stay. He was on his way to explore the Mississippi River to its mouth. Tonty and a party of French and Indians made that great journey with him. In April, 1682, they reached the Gulf of Mexico. La Salle then claimed the Mississippi and the surrounding area for King Louis XIV and named the region Louisiana. Five years later, in 1687, La Salle was murdered by his own men while attempting to start a colony in Louisiana. Thus ends the story of one of the most ambitious men who ever appeared in Niagara County.

English threaten French trade in Niagara

La Salle had left only a little evidence of his passing on our Niagara. Even so, France claimed it. But no Frenchman tried to take possession until Albany traders appeared on the scene. In the autumn of 1685 the governor of New York colony started the French thinking about raising another fort on the site of Fort Niagara. It all began when the governor, a snappy fellow named

Thomas Dongan, licensed a party of Albany traders to paddle to the Upper Great Lakes and trade English goods for furs. Dongan knew that the French would get angry if English traders invaded territory France had long regarded as its own. But he went ahead anyway.

Who was Johannes Rooseboom?

He led Albany traders into Niagara

Governor Dongan gave a young Dutchman who lived in Albany the job of leading the trading expedition. His name was Johannes Rooseboom. Rooseboom was a capable young man and a good leader. But he did not know the way to the upper lakes, nor was he familiar with the languages of the Indians who lived there. Thus he needed a guide and an interpreter. A Frenchman named Marion la Fontaine was just the man for the task. Fontaine was at this time living in New York colony. Before this, however, he had lived in the French settlements and had roamed the western woods. The French considered him a traitor because he had settled in the English colony.

Rooseboom's expedition started out from Schenectady in 1685. Fontaine guided the traders up the Mohawk and then by the Oneida Lake route to Lake Ontario. From here the party followed the lake shore to the Niagara River. Then a paddle up the river, a stiff climb up Lewiston Hill, a tramp along the portage, and the traders found themselves on the upper Niagara River. This was the first time white men, other than Frenchmen, had ever been in Niagara country. The remainder of the journey was fairly easy. Up the Niagara River to Lake Erie they went. Then a swift paddle took them to the upper lakes where the traders got a warm reception from Indians who had known no other white men except the French.

High prices and rum soon won Indian hearts completely. Never before had they been paid such a big sum for their furs. And as for English rum, they quickly made the pleasant discovery that it was every bit as good as French brandy in taste, perhaps even somewhat better. And what was more important it made them drunk faster, which, of course, was what interested them most anyway. As might be imagined, Rooseboom's traders did a rushing business. Every canoe was soon filled to overflowing with heaps of furs. Now it only remained to get out and get back to Albany, without running into French who had already learned of the invasion of the English traders.

What were the results of the Albany expedition?

Rooseboom and his traders did get back with their precious stock of furs, although the French tried to stop them at Niagara. But Rooseboom slipped by before the French could set their trap and soon afterward paddled down the Mohawk again. Dongan was happy, as was Rooseboom, but the French were angry. Dongan did not care about French feelings. The expedition had been profitable and Dongan made plans for a bigger trading expedition for the following year.

Traders from New York colony went to the upper lakes in two groups in the autumn of 1686 and in the spring of 1687. Rooseboom led the first party. Fontaine went along again, unluckily for him as things turned out. A Scottish friend of Dongan commanded the second party.

This time the French were not caught napping. Neither party got so much as a whiff of the Indian traders on the upper lakes. Both Rooseboom and the Scotsman ran into French and Indian war parties coming east to invade New York. Their store of trade goods and rum that was to have gone for the purchase of beaver pelts was taken and divided. The French distributed the trade goods among the Indians and drank the rum themselves. Then the rangers and their prisoners paddled on to Niagara County. The French later released Rooseboom and the other traders. As for Fontaine, a rattling volley from French muskets snuffed out his life at the mouth of the Niagara River.



The French seek to strengthen their hold on Niagara

Why did the French war upon the Senecas?

Indians hampered French trading

Albany traders were not the only headache that the French had. The Senecas had for some time been making pests of themselves by raiding French traders and the tribes that sold them furs. Finally the Marquis Denonville, Governor of Canada, felt that it was high time for action. A fort at the mouth of the Niagara would block Albany traders and check the Iroquois, thus keeping the western fur trade in French hands, where Denonville was sure it belonged. As a beginning, Denonville figured it would be necessary to teach the Senecas to respect French arms. In fact, he meant to crush them if he could.

But an invasion of Iroquois territory would be no easy matter. Denonville knew the Senecas were hard and merciless fighters and would surely battle for every inch of ground. So he planned carefully. He sent word to his French captains in the West to enroll every Indian able to shoot an arrow, swing a tomahawk, or fire a musket, and then to meet him at Irondequoit Bay (near Rochester, New York). Meanwhile Denonville scoured the St. Lawrence settlements gathering soldiers and Indians whom he brought with him to Irondequoit.

Denonville's war with the Senecas was short. He had many more men and thus was able to beat them in the one big battle they fought. After this battle Denonville allowed his soldiers and Indians to plunder Seneca country for nearly two weeks. Then he ordered a withdrawal to Irondequoit Bay where the army sailed for Niagara. But Denonville had not finished what he had set out to do. All he had really done when he invaded the Seneca country was to upset a hornet's nest without killing many of the hornets. As a nation the Senecas had not been badly hurt. They were, in fact, fighting mad and eagerly awaiting a chance to get even with the French. And that chance came at the mouth of the Niagara River.

While the Senecas nursed their wounds and swore revenge, Denonville's army landed at Niagara's mouth and camped near the spot where Fort Conti had stood nine years before. His soldiers pitched in and hacked down trees and in three days another stockade fort rose on the same site. Denonville was well pleased with this new fort and he named it in honor of the leading figure in New France—himself. And so Fort Denonville became the second French fort on the site now occupied by Fort Niagara.

What happened to Fort Denonville?

His task finished, or so he thought, Denonville sailed back to the St. Lawrence. His army sailed with him except for one hundred soldiers under Captain De Troyes who remained to guard the new fort. De Troyes and his men now became the principal actors in a drama filled with misery and death.

Indians and disease killed off most of the garrison

No sooner had the army gone than De Troyes learned that the store of provisions delivered in late fall to the fort had gone bad. Somehow water had got into the barrels and soaked the flour and worms had eaten into the biscuits. De Troyes sent soldiers into the nearby woods to shoot game. But instead of game they found Senecas, who made short work of most of them. He next had the men fish and plant corn. But fishing was skimpy and only a few scrawny corn stalks sprouted. Then disease began to strike down the hungry soldiers of Fort Denonville and De Troyes himself fell ill.



*Father Milet t raises the cross at Fort Denonville
on Good Friday, 1688.*

The autumn of 1687 passed. Winter came and went, with death a familiar visitor in the log huts within the stockade. By spring only twelve of the original one hundred soldiers remained alive. This handful of sick and hungry soldiers would surely have found graves among their dead comrades and their captain had it not been for the arrival of friendly Indians who brought corn and hunted deer and turkeys.

In April a relief ship brought fresh troops from Canada and gladdened the hearts of the remaining men. On Good Friday 1688, French soldiers stared silently as a priest, Jean Milet, said mass before a huge cross he had set up among the graves of Captain De Troyes and his men. A copy of Milet's cross now stands at the edge of the parade ground at Fort Niagara.

The Senecas forced the French to abandon the fort

The appearance of fresh soldiers did absolutely nothing to scare off the Senecas prowling the nearby woods. Moreover, the Senecas refused Denonville's peace proposals, at least so long as his troops remained in Niagara County. The situation grew more and more hopeless for the French as the summer wore on, although the Senecas actually made no attacks on the fort. By the autumn of 1688 Denonville had had enough. He threw up his hands in despair and ordered his fort abandoned.

Niagara becomes an Outpost of France

How did France finally win Niagara County?

Years later, the French did raise a lasting fort in Niagara County. And they owed it to the work of one of their officers named Chabert Joncaire. Joncaire had much influence with the Senecas. It had all begun many years before when he was taken captive by them. Like many another captive before him, he was sentenced to the stake, the usual fate for anyone who fell into Seneca hands.

Joncaire became a Seneca

Briefly, here is the story. The Senecas were about to bind Joncaire to a stake when an old chief, impatient to begin the torture, tried shoving Joncaire's finger into the bowl of his pipe. Joncaire swung and his fist smashed into the old man's jaw, dropping him like a stone into the dust at his feet. The crowd naturally thought the whole thing very funny indeed. Yelps of appreciation rang in the village. Joncaire was an enemy, and French to boot, but what did that matter? He had courage and this they could admire.

So the affair ended happily. A moment before Joncaire had

faced the stake. Now he faced a crowd of admiring Indians. In short, he was a hero and he was given a hero's reward, the highest in fact that the Seneca Nation could grant. He was made a Seneca. No adoption into the tribe was complete without a wife and Joncaire was given one. More important than his bride were the rights and privileges that he got as an adopted Seneca. These he used for France. And what France wanted most of all of course, at least where Niagara County was concerned, was a fort on the Niagara River.

Joncaire built a trading post at Lewiston

But even with Joncaire's help the French did not get a fort at Niagara overnight. It took time, cleverness, and downright lying on the part of Joncaire. He began by telling his adopted people that he needed a house, a thing they could easily understand since he had just married. He was not particular. Any house would do for a start, or so he told the Indians. The location of his house, however, was a different matter. He insisted on living in Niagara County. He especially wanted to build on the banks of the Niagara River. In the end, the Senecas allowed their son, as they called him, to start housekeeping at Lewiston.

Thus in 1720 we find Joncaire hard at work raising his so-called bark dwelling at the foot of the portage. His house, when completed, was full of loopholes from which muskets might be poked and fired in time of need. Surrounding his house was a stockade to keep out unwanted visitors, which meant his Indian relatives and the English. Joncaire called his house *Magazin Royal*, or King's Store, and stuffed it with trade goods. A party of Senecas soon raised cabins near *Magazin Royal* and Joncaire put them to work hauling goods up Lewiston Hill and over the portage to the Upper Landing.

Construction of Fort Niagara and Little Fort Niagara gave France control

Magazin Royal was only a stepping stone to the fort that the French had wanted since the days of La Salle. And there was no time to lose, either. By the 1720's time was running out for the French. Year by year they saw the English and Dutch traders in Albany capture a bigger part of their fur market. Higher prices for furs and cheaper trade goods attracted Indians and some French to Albany. French authorities fined and imprisoned every outlaw French trader they caught, but this did not stop the illegal traffic in furs for one minute. Only better prices could do this and the French could not hope to equal the bargains offered by Albany.



Raising the French Castle at Fort Niagara in 1726.

As might be imagined, this situation was bad enough. But then the English added insult to injury by moving practically to the doorstep of the French. In 1724 they raised a fort at Oswego on Lake Ontario. This was the last straw as far as the French were concerned. The Governor of Canada called on Joncaire and ordered him to consult with the Senecas and get a decent fort built on the Niagara River. He hoped that this fort would stop the flow of western furs to the English and Dutch traders.

Joncaire was just the man for this job. The Senecas had trusted him for years and in the end he was able to persuade them to allow the French to build a stone house on the Niagara River. Joncaire naturally hid the fact that this house was really going to be a fort, and a strong fort at that. He told the Indians that the French needed it for storing goods and they believed him. If he had not said this, the French plan would surely have been ruined, for no Seneca chief would have agreed to a fort of stone in Niagara County.

The French went right to work. They had waited for this moment for years and they did not want to give the Senecas a chance to change their minds. An engineer named Gaspard de Lery was picked to raise the stone house on the Niagara River. De Lery chose the mouth of the river as the best place to build, although Joncaire wanted Lewiston, as near to *Magazin Royal* as possible. De Lery, of course, made a wise choice. That piece of land at the mouth of the river was the key to the whole river and the river was the key to the West. La Salle and Denonville had been right.

De Lery built the stone house in 1726. He built it as much like a French chateau as he possibly could because he wanted to fool the Senecas, who knew what a French fort looked like. Actually, De Lery's stone house was a strong fort. He made the walls four feet thick and built huge stone arches to stand the shock of cannons fired from the top floor. Moreover, just beyond the thick oaken entrance door, a well was later dug so that soldiers would have a steady supply of water during a siege. The Senecas did not realize that the French had tricked them until it was too late to do anything about it.

Fort Niagara gave the French control of the key to the West. The French also built Little Fort Niagara at Upper Landing to guard the south end of the portage. But they never regained complete control of the western fur trade. Indians and outlaw traders continued to carry furs to New York colony during the years the French flag floated over Niagara County.

In the next chapter we shall see that flag pulled down and Niagara County become an outpost of Great Britain and finally a part of the United States of America.

4. Britain loses Niagara Region to the United States

Britain and France fight over North America

The year 1689 saw England and France begin a series of wars over colonies and trade. It is the last of these wars that concerns us here. Beginning in America, it was known as the French and Indian War. Later it spread to Europe and Asia where it was called the Seven Years' War.

It all started because both England and France (ignoring the real owners, the Indians) said that the Ohio Valley belonged to them. The French had the better claim, having been first in the valley and having raised a string of forts there. But England ignored this, and British traders began pushing over the Alleghenies. The long and short of the whole business was that neither side would give an inch. At the same time both swore that the other was trespassing. The matter was finally decided by muskets, bayonets and cannons.

A young colonial major named George Washington actually started the fighting by surprising some French soldiers in 1754. But neither England nor France bothered to declare war for two years. Meanwhile the French had a winning streak. A big victory came in Pennsylvania in 1755 when French and Indians ambushed and almost wiped out an army under a British general named Braddock.

How did Fort Niagara become involved in the war?

But the luck of the French did not continue. In North America, one French stronghold after another fell as the years passed. And one of these strongholds was Fort Niagara, at the mouth of the Niagara River. This is where we take up our story.

The English lay siege to Fort Niagara

How did the English manage to take the fort?

The English army led by General Prideaux and Sir William Johnson outnumbered the French defenders

It was near the end of 1758 that the British made plans for the conquest of Fort Niagara, the key French fort that linked Canada with the West. At Oswego, an army of over two thousand soldiers assembled under a general named John Prideaux. But this was not the whole army. Sir William Johnson, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, brought in six hundred Iroquois warriors. And several hundred more Indians joined up at Fort Niagara after the siege had begun.

The army made ready to sail from Oswego in July, 1759. Prideaux watched his sweating, joking soldiers, muskets glittering in the sunlight, crowd into large canoes and steer for Niagara. In the distance he saw Johnson's Indians paddling near the shore.

One evening a few days later the army glided into the mouth of Four Mile Creek, so-called because it was four miles from Fort Niagara. Soldiers pitched their tents nearby and slung kettles and soon hundreds of campfires flickered in the surrounding woods. The Indians camped some distance away.

Meanwhile Indian scouts sneaked through the woods and surprised some French pigeon hunters at the edge of the clearing

near Fort Niagara. One hunter got away. He raced across the darkened clearing and sounded the alarm. For the rest of the night French soldiers stood behind the walls of the fort and waited for an attack that did not come.

At daybreak Prideaux had batteries of cannons set up and started British soldiers digging out zigzag trenches through the woods back of the clearing. Other soldiers began dragging boats and cannons through the woods some distance up the river. They then ferried the cannons across to Canada and set up batteries opposite Fort Niagara. Now the British could bombard the fort from Canada.

Fort commander Pouchot lacked munitions

The French commander at the fort was a captain named François Pouchot. Thanks to him, the fort had earthworks and moats, a powder storehouse, and artillery batteries. But even so he had less than six hundred men under arms. He knew that he could not hold out without help.

So he sent runners racing south to French forts in Pennsylvania to bring up more soldiers. On the way there the runners stopped off at Little Fort Niagara. The soldiers there burned it to keep it from falling into British hands. They ferried the horses and cattle, carts and tools and guns to Canada. Later they slipped by Prideaux's sentries and got into Fort Niagara.



Building a canoe took several days. The Iroquois used elm bark for canoes since birch bark was scarce in their lands.

While all this was happening, Prideaux had gotten his siege operations well under way. Before he opened fire, however, he sent an officer to the fort with a demand for its surrender. But Pouchot expected help and so he turned down the demand. As things turned out, he was not to get that help. But of course he did not know that then.

Pouchot's refusal to surrender brought about an eighteen-day siege. During this time cannons flashed and thundered over the river and clearing. British soldiers dug more trenches and got closer to the fort. Meanwhile Pouchot's cannons kept up a steady fire, raking the British lines.

And so the days passed. Fog came. It drifted in ghost-like from the lake and draped the fort, the trees, and the river. Then spattering rains fell and drenched the British soldiers huddled in the rapidly flooding trenches. Prideaux however pressed the attack. His wet and tired troops pushed and dragged cannons through the mud and set them in new positions nearer Fort Niagara. And all the while his batteries in Canada hurled red-hot shot across the river and into the fort.

The bombardment went on. British guns roared and shells plowed into the earthworks of the fort and ripped gaping holes. Within the fort, the fierce bombardment caused storehouses and other wooden buildings to blaze.

French cannon fire began to slacken as ammunition ran low. Then the gunners ran out of wadding for their cannons. Hastily they took hay and straw and bed linen and shirts and stuffed these into the cannons for wadding. French muskets broke down continually during the siege and gunsmiths worked round the clock repairing them as best they could.

Pouchot made his wounded soldiers, and even women and children, work day and night filling bags with earth. These bags they piled one on top of another to plug holes in the battered walls. Pouchot kept his soldiers at their posts. Some had been days without sleep and they nodded over their muskets. Others, completely exhausted, slept like dead men. There was no question in Pouchot's mind that the end was near if help did not come soon. Anxiously he gazed up the river and looked for the soldiers he had sent for.

French reinforcements were routed at the Battle of La Belle Famille

over the portage road. They climbed down Lewiston Hill—and

And help was on the way. An army of French and Indians had gathered in Pennsylvania and hastened north. They beached their canoes and boats at Fort Little Ni-

agara, now a burned ruin, and hurried

marched straight into a British and Indian trap at La Belle Famille, a short distance from Fort Niagara.

In the fort that morning a soldier's shout brought Pouchot hurrying to the walls. The day was clear. He looked southward, his eyes following the soldier's pointing finger. And in the distance he saw puffs of musket smoke and fighting groups of soldiers and Indians, now moving forward, now retreating. He watched, tense and hardly breathing, knowing full well that the fate of his fort and indeed that of New France hung on this battle.

Meanwhile, at La Belle Famille, French and Indians reeled under a sharp fire from British soldiers who had taken up positions behind a breastwork of fallen trees. Then the British, sharp-pointed bayonets gleaming at the ends of their muskets, leaped the breastwork and charged the disorganized enemy. At the same time yelping Indians rushed in from the sides. It was too much for the French. French officers raced back and forth like wild men trying desperately to rally their men. But the French broke ranks and ran southward and their Indians fled with them. Dead and wounded lay strewn on the field and along the trail to the escarpment at Lewiston.

An Indian slipped through the British lines and brought Pouchot news of the disaster. He knew then that it was all over. France had lost Niagara and any more bloodshed would be useless.

Shortly a trumpet blared from the British trenches. It must have sounded like the clap of doom to Pouchot. And so it was—for the fort and for the French empire in the West. As the trumpet blast died away, he observed a British officer, a white flag fluttering over his head, appear in the clearing. Some twenty-four hours later, Pouchot stood stiffly at attention and heard the expected demand for the surrender of Fort Niagara.

Pouchot turned the fort over to the British. He had no choice now. Prideaux, however, was unable to enjoy his hour of triumph. He had been accidentally killed by a shell fragment from one of his own cannons. As next in command, Sir William Johnson accepted Pouchot's surrender.

On July 26, 1759, a stirring scene took place before the eyes of Johnson's army. Within the fort, French soldiers snapped to attention as drums beat. And then with their muskets on their shoulders, they marched out of Fort Niagara. The French withdrawal was the signal for swarms of Iroquois to pour over the walls and loot the fort. Then British soldiers hauled up the Union Jack. The air was filled with the cheers of soldiers and the yelps of

Indians. The thing was done. French power in Niagara had come to an end.

The following month, Quebec fell to the British. Montreal surrendered the next year. And by the end of 1761, the Union Jack fluttered over all the French forts in the West. Thus French dreams of empire in North America died. Half a continent now belonged to Great Britain.

The western tribes unite

After the French had been driven out, Indians in the West welcomed the British because they wanted rum and cheap trade goods. But they quickly discovered that there was a world of difference between them and the French.

Why did the Indians turn against the British?

White men invaded their land Traders and landseekers followed close on the heels of the British soldiers. A trading license could be had for a few coins. Crafty traders now swarmed over the West. They cheated and robbed the Indians, whom they looked upon as animals. Settlers flocked across the Alleghenies over a road cut by the British Army during the French and Indian War. And the forests crawled with land speculators who pretended to be hunters, but actually spied out the Indian lands which they hoped later to buy cheap and sell to white settlers at a good price.

Lord Amherst planned to wipe out the tribes Before the invasion of these white people the red men got little protection from the British Government. The commander of British forces in North America, a gentleman named Lord Amherst, hated Indians. And he made no bones about it. He wanted the West opened to white settlement and the Indians stood in the way. The answer to the problem, as he saw it, was to wipe out the tribes. This could be done by warfare. It could also be done by spreading disease. Amherst went so far as to suggest that blankets infected with small-pox be distributed among the Indians.

Another problem in the relations between the Indians and the British was the matter of gifts. Over the years, the French had given them presents in return for friendship and peace. The French had always done this and the Indians naturally expected the British to do the same thing. But Lord Amherst was a different kind of man. And he would have none of it.

The tribes grumbled and finally worked themselves into a rage. Sir William Johnson was still the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and he had his hands full trying to keep the tribes from reaching for tomahawks. Johnson had a way with Indians. But in the end even he could not stop an uprising. The thing had gone too far. Revolt was in the wind. Around the council fires warriors were listening to French agents, who said that the French king had been asleep but would now send armies to help them drive the British out.

What was Pontiac's Rebellion?

And then along came Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, and one of the most remarkable Indians who ever lived. He took up the cause of his people. During the winter of 1762-1763, he worked to unite them in a strong confederation to shove the British back across the mountains. Under his leadership the Indians had a brief moment of glory.

Pontiac struck Detroit in May, 1763. At the same time, his Indian lieutenants hit other British forts up and down the frontier. It is not our place here to go into Pontiac's Rebellion in detail. Success was sweet but short. His Indian armies captured one post after another. Only Detroit held out against him. However, Pontiac soon saw that he had bitten off more than he could chew. The French king's sleep was undisturbed by sounds of musket fire in far off North America and no French armies appeared to aid Pontiac. Meanwhile, Lord Amherst hammered back. Pontiac was beaten and he knew it. Finally the Indians assembled at Fort Niagara in the summer of 1764 to make peace. Discouraged and heartbroken, an outcast deserted by his followers, his world in ruins about his feet, Pontiac slipped away to the Illinois country. There he was murdered by an Indian for a barrel of rum.

Why did the Senecas rebel?

Pontiac's Rebellion had been an uprising of western tribes for the most part. But the Senecas took a hand in it for a while, although Fort Niagara was not attacked. The trouble with the Senecas could be traced to Lord Amherst and an ex-soldier named John Stedman.

Whitemen would settle on Indian land

After Fort Niagara fell, the British repaired the damage done during the siege and strengthened the fort. Besides this they raised a fort below Lewiston Hill and garrisoned it with two companies of regulars. Up river on the ruins of the French fort they raised another fort named Fort

Schlosser. Thus the British grip on Niagara was secure, or seemed so. And Lord Amherst was free to open the area for white settlement.

He granted ten thousand acres of the Seneca land to a Schenectady company. It was supposed to begin settlement. A company agent did build a storehouse and dwelling on the site of Fort Little Niagara. But Johnson soon put a stop to Amherst's plans. Johnson knew that the Senecas would take the warpath if the Schenectady company went unchecked. He advised the British government to take away the company's grant. It did, and Amherst's scheme to settle Niagara County collapsed. Although the British Parliament had supported Johnson and stopped settlement at Niagara, many Senecas must have seen the handwriting on the wall. It was only a question of time before they would be overrun by white settlers.

Senecas on the portage were thrown out of work

Then in 1763 Stedman was appointed Portage Master at Niagara. And he went right to work at his new job. He improved the portage road and introduced carts pulled by ox teams to haul goods. Now all this was progress, of course. But the hundreds of Seneca portage carriers that he threw out of work did not see it that way. By this time many Senecas must have been fed up with the British, anyway. So it is easy for us to imagine Pontiac's agents talking them into raiding British portage traffic to stop supplies from reaching Detroit. In any case the result of this whole business was the Massacre at Devil's Hole in September, 1763.

This is how that tragedy happened. Stedman and a small guard of soldiers took a wagon train over the portage to Fort Schlosser. Fort Schlosser, remember, was at the upper end of the portage road. They got through to the fort all right. But on the way back to Lewiston they ran into a Seneca ambush at Devil's Hole, a steep-walled break in the side of the gorge just south of Lewiston Hill.

A few in Stedman's party got away. Two that we know of by name were Stedman and a drummer boy named Matthews. Stedman was mounted on a fast horse and he simply spurred the beast through the Indians grasping at him and galloped back to Fort Schlosser. Matthews, on the other hand, jumped into the gorge, drum and all. Fortunately for him, he missed breaking his neck by landing in a tree-top. The Indians overlooked him and he later made it to Fort Niagara.

Meanwhile, the soldiers stationed at the foot of Lewiston Hill heard the shots and screams of battle. They suspected what was happening and rushed to help their comrades. They found them

and they also met the Senecas waiting in ambush. Tomahawk and scalping knife soon did bloody work on them too.

What were the effects of the Seneca uprising?

The British had their hands full with Pontiac at this time. So the Senecas got away with this massacre, at least for a while. Then Pontiac was crushed and the situation changed. The Senecas became scared, and with reason. Several hundred of them went to see Johnson at his home in the Mohawk Valley in the summer of 1764. What they wanted was a way out, so they could escape punishment by the British Army.

The Senecas ceded land to the British

And Sir William showed that he was their friend. He did not ask a life for a life, as he could have. He merely wanted land, and not much at that . . . just a thin strip four miles wide along the Niagara River. Probably the Senecas congratulated themselves at escaping so easily and so cheaply. Of course, at the time, this strip was one of the most valuable pieces of land in all of North America. In 1764 their chiefs signed a treaty giving this land to the British. The grateful Senecas also gave Johnson all the islands in the Niagara River. Sir William later turned them over to the British king.

The British gar- risoned the portage

After the ambush at Devil's Hole, the British took no more chances on the portage road. They did not intend to be caught napping by the Indians again. A British army engineer named John Montessor was sent to build a chain of blockhouses along the route. One went up near Devil's Hole itself and others were spaced at short distances all the way from Lewiston to Fort Schlosser.

Montessor then turned his attention to Lewiston Hill. He built a wooden railway there that has been claimed as the first in America. It ran from the foot of the escarpment to the top. Goods went up and down in cradles which moved on grooved log rails. Montessor's inclined railway ended the use of Indian carriers on the hill.

Once the fear caused by the Devil's Hole massacre died away, Niagara turned into a protected highway for British trade. The tramp of scarlet-coated soldiers mingled with the crack of whips, the snort and stamp of oxen, and the creak of wagon wheels on the portage road. Over the years, hundreds of tons of trade goods and furs moved back and forth. Niagara remained a British trade route until 1796.

8. Start a scrapbook of pictures and drawings of costumes. Begin with Indian costumes and the clothing of earliest white settlers. Keep a record of styles and costumes by adding to the scrapbook as your study of history progresses through the year.
9. After re-reading the section of your book that discusses how the Niagara region became the outpost of France, make a list of the reasons.
10. Select pupils to dramatize the following series of scenes:
 - a. The Senecas trying to argue La Salle out of exploring the Niagara region.
 - b. The Senecas greeting the Rooseboom trading party when it first appeared.
 - c. Joncaire and the Senecas discussing the right to build Fort Niagara.
11. Prepare a complete report on the siege and capture of Fort Niagara by the British during the French and Indian War. Include something about the military leaders, the strategy of both commanders (the conduct of the siege, and the defense of the fort), and the results of the British victory.
12. Imagine that an agent of Pontiac is meeting with a Seneca chieftain. The agent is urging that the Senecas join Pontiac's Rebellion. Write the speech he might have used in persuading the chief.
13. Make up a ten-question True and False test on the events leading to and following the construction of Fort Denonville. The section in Chapter Three called "The French seek to strengthen their hold" covers this topic.
14. Prepare a brief radio news broadcast concerning Sullivan's attempt to end the British-Indian raids on the frontier during the Revolution. Present the facts only; offer no opinions. After reading it to your classmates, ask them for criticisms.
15. Draw a cartoon to illustrate Niagara as an outpost of France.
16. Write a one-paragraph "Who am I?" quiz on a Part II Indian leader; then present it to the class orally.
17. Illustrate on a map of Niagara River the series of fortifications which appeared there. Label the name and date of each neatly. Begin in 1678 with La Motte's house and stockade, the earliest white fortification. What would be a good title for this project?
18. Give a "thumbnail" biographical sketch of La Salle up to the time he traveled through the Niagara region.

Books with exciting stories

- Anderson and Flick, *A Short History of the State of New York*. Difficult reading.
- Hart, Albert B., and Hazard, Blanche (eds.), *Colonial Children*. A source reader in American history. Grades 6-8.
- Berry, Eric, *Seven Beaver Skins*. 1941. Grades 6-9.
- Bingham, R. W., *Niagara Highway of Heroes*. Buffalo: 1944. Grades 6-9.
- Burlingame, Roger, *Three Bags Full*. Story of a Dutch family in central New York. Grades 6-9.
- Earle, E. M., *Colonial Days in Old New York*. 1896. Grades 7-12.
- Jacobson, H. S., *For the Freedom of the Mohawk*. Mohawk river valley in the Revolution. Grades 7-12.
- Lenski, Lois, *Indian Captive*. Story of Mary Jemison. Grades 7-9.
- Orton, Helen, *The Gold-Laced Coat*. Story of a boy who went to old Fort Niagara. Grades 7-9.
- Richards Atlas of New York State*

Part III

AMERICANS BUILD UP NIAGARA COUNTY

5. Early American settlement begins
6. War strikes the Niagara Frontier
7. Settlements take root along lake,
river, and creek
8. Settlements spring up along canal
and escarpment.

5. Early American settlement begins

The 1790's find few white men in Niagara

What was the country like?

The strip along the river showed few signs of life A traveler, riding into Niagara County in the 1790's, found it largely a wilderness untouched by white men except for a narrow strip along the Niagara River. At the beginning of this strip, Fort Niagara guarded the river mouth. South of the fort, a narrow road passed through oak forests to Lower Landing, now Lewiston. Below the escarpment, Lower Landing was a small clearing, facing the river and walled in by forests on three sides. Only a log tavern, a ship dock, and a few Indian lodges showed that men lived there.

At Lower Landing, Indians toiled on Montessor's railway, loading and unloading goods. Above the escarpment, trade carts rumbled over the portage road southward to Fort Schlosser. Here, in a clearing by the river, some shacks tied together by well-beaten footpaths clustered near the fort.

People sought companionship in Middaugh's Tavern At Lower Landing our traveler headed for Middaugh's tavern. He swung down from the saddle, tied his horse to the hitching post, and strode into the crude log building.

Inside, his boots tamped the dirt floor as he made his way to the bar. He noticed the usual rough crowd of dirty frontiersmen. Traders, trappers, soldiers, and Indians crowded the place laughing, swearing, and drinking. Since it was summertime, the traveler saw a group of young cattle drovers among the others. Laughing and pushing each other playfully, these drovers were enjoying a well-earned rest after the long trail drive from the east.

Niagara region welcomed trail drivers Summer cattle drives to Niagara began soon after the Revolution ended in 1783. Drives started from Maryland and New Jersey and followed the invasion path General Sullivan had marched over in 1779. Young drovers herded noisy, bawling cattle to the Susquehanna River and then moved north to the Chemung River. Once in New York, they followed the east shore of Seneca Lake and then swung west to the Genesee River. From here they

continued west, pushing through the great Tonawanda Swamp to Fort Niagara, where they sold their herds.

These drovers pushed their herds across rivers and creeks and over hills and through swamps. Day after day they plodded on, halting only to rest at night, or to let the cattle graze in clearings along the trail. Always the cattle were in danger. Wolves and bears crouched in the underbrush and struck them down if the drovers were not careful. Sometimes wolves trailed a herd for days, waiting for a chance to strike. Nighttime, of course, was especially dangerous and drovers built great log fires to keep the wolves and bears away.

But wild animals were not the only danger the drovers faced on the trail. Indian villages dotted the way to the Niagara area and Indians always made the drovers fearful. And for good reason. The closest large white settlement was at least a hundred miles away. This meant that the drovers had to depend on themselves.

When drovers moved their cattle into an Indian village, an uproar followed. Barking dogs, hooting children, and pushing and shoving Indians crowded the herd to a stop. There was little the drovers could do, so they sat in their saddles and waited. Finally silence gradually settled over the crowd and a chief stepped forward and demanded cattle for passage through his village. Drovers considered themselves lucky if they could get away with giving the Indians only one of their cows. This was the usual price. Once they had handed over the cow, the drovers wasted no time pushing the rest of the herd through the village. There was always a chance that the Indians would change their minds and take the whole herd.

But the worst danger on a trail drive came from rustlers. Drovers feared these outlaws more than Indians. And with good cause. Rustlers hid in thickets near clearings, or by creeks and campsites, and waited to ambush unwary drovers. They struck by day or night and drovers toppled from saddles or died in blankets. Then the rustlers robbed the dead, stole their cows, and melted off into the forest. They left the bodies of the dead for the wolves.

Drovers sold their herds at Fort Niagara and then galloped off to Middaugh's tavern for a wild party. Sometimes they invited Indians who lived nearby. At one such frolic over two hundred Senecas and Tuscaroras whooped it up for days, dancing and drinking. Exhaustion finally ended that wild spree.

Before trailing home the drovers spent a few days looking at the sights and buying furs and cranberries. No trip was complete without a view of Niagara Falls and the gorge. The furs they

later sold for high prices back home in New Jersey or Maryland. The homeward trail was the most dangerous part of the trip. Robbers in even greater numbers infested the trail. Furs were more valuable than cattle and easier to sell.

But the trip home also had lighter moments. The gay and care-free drovers were always ready to give a willing hand to pioneers raising cabins or clearing land. At such times a few young drovers could accomplish a great deal for overworked frontier settlers. Then they moved on, reaching home in the autumn.

Some drovers remained in the Niagara area and became settlers. But settlement really began only after the Holland Land Company bought Western New York.

Indians sell Western New York

Massachusetts claimed Western New York for a long time and sold it to Robert Morris, the man who had helped finance the American Revolution. Morris then sold it to a group of Dutch bankers who had formed the Holland Land Company. Thus the land the company bought became known as the Holland Land Purchase. This purchase did not include a mile-wide strip along the Niagara River. This Mile Strip with its valuable Niagara Portage belonged to New York State.

How was the sale brought about?

A council was called at Big Tree

Before Robert Morris could complete the sale to the Holland Land Company he had to buy Western New York from the Senecas. With this in mind he called them to a council in 1797 at Big Tree, near Geneseo, New York.

Messengers sped over the forest trails carrying the call to every Seneca and Tuscarora village in Western New York. In village after village council fires burned long into the night, as Indians decided on attending the Big Tree Council. Finally the decision was made and the Indians prepared to leave. In some cases whole villages packed their belongings and headed for the Genesee River. From valley and hill and plain Senecas and Tuscaroras, and other Iroquois as well, moved slowly on Big Tree.

Big Tree swarmed with activity. Day by day the people poured in, men, women, children, and infants, and filled the clearing. At one time over three thousand Indians gathered at Big Tree. While Indians trod the trails leading to Big Tree, Thomas Morris, son of Robert Morris, had cattle herded into the clearing to feed them. And pack-horse after pack-horse loaded with tents, rum, blankets,

tobacco, and trinkets picked its way down the hills into the clearing. Seneca warriors paraded around or gathered in groups to talk and smoke. Squaws set up shelters and lugged firewood for the cooking fires that dotted the clearing. And all the while naked children darted about, playing amid the crowds or in the tall grass.

The camp of the white men was off to one side of the clearing. Here armed men guarded supplies and the herds of cattle and horses that grazed nearby. Most white agents mixed with the Indians only to hand out gifts and beef or to talk business with them.

Men important to Western New York attended the council—Thomas Morris, council leader; Joseph Ellicott, future Holland Land Company agent; Red Jacket and Cornplanter, Seneca chiefs; and many others. The United States Government as well as the Holland Land Company sent agents to the Big Tree Council. Land buyers and traders also gathered at Big Tree.

Finally, in the muggy August heat the council fires flared and the council began. Squatting chiefs, agents, and interpreters ringed the fire. Squaws and young braves crowded behind the circle, eager to watch. One by one, agents and chiefs stood solemnly before the council and spoke for or against selling land.

Red Jacket's objections to Treaty of Big Tree were overcome

The council went on for weeks. Each chief repeated the arguments of those who spoke before him and then gave his own views. This was tribal custom. Every move by Morris and the Holland Land Company agents to hasten the land sale was blocked by Red Jacket. This great Seneca orator attacked the land sale and tried to wreck the council. He argued that white men only respected the Indians because they owned land. Once the land was sold his people would become beggars. His sharp words cut deeply into his listener's hearts. And finally Red Jacket pushed the council to a point where it was ready to break up. He stood erect and slowly spread his hands over the fire, signaling that the council fire was out and the council was over.

But Thomas Morris and company agents did not give up easily. They outwitted Red Jacket. They did this by bribing the squaws with gifts. The scheme worked. The squaws decided to continue the council. This was their tribal right. In the end, the Indians signed the Treaty of Big Tree.

Red Jacket also signed the Treaty of Big Tree. He was paid to sign it but he also wanted to appear important to George Washington by signing such an important treaty. He and other Iroquois chiefs had met Washington in Philadelphia in 1792. He had re-



Red Jacket signals that the council fire is out. Big Tree 1797.

ceived a large silver medal from President Washington. And like his red jacket, he wore his medal proudly wherever he went.

With the Indians' rights extinguished, Morris completed the sale of Western New York to the Holland Land Company. The Indians got \$100,000 for their land and agreed to move onto reservations. Although the treaty did not require it, the company gave two square miles of the reservation land in what is now Niagara County to the Tuscaroras. In 1780 the Senecas had given them one square mile.

And so the Council of Big Tree ended. Indians broke camp and drifted homeward, leaving a clearing scattered with unwanted belongings and trash. In time the littered clearing near Genesee was overgrown. Grass again bent before the wind, weeds grew up among the dead ashes of the council fire, and empty lean-tos rotted and collapsed, becoming dens for wandering animals.

What effect did the treaty have upon the Senecas?

Signs of the council vanished from the land; and in a way, so did the Senecas. White men nibbled at their reservations until little remained. Senecas lost their Buffalo Creek reservation in 1845 and much of the Tonawanda Creek reservation. Now they hold only a small reservation in the Niagara area. Red Jacket's words rang true. Without land, the Senecas did for a time become beggars. And as they wandered about looking for a lasting home and trying to adopt the ways of the white man, his words returned to haunt them.

The Holland Land Company opens Western New York to settlement

How was the purchase made ready for settlers?

It was surveyed by Joseph Ellicott With the Indians removed, the Holland Company turned its energies toward settlement. Company agents chose Joseph Ellicott to survey the Purchase. It was a wise choice. Ellicott was one of the best surveyors in the United States. He and his brother Andrew had surveyed the Western New York boundary in 1789. Later, the Ellicott brothers laid out the site of Washington, D. C.

Ellicott was also an expert woodsman. As a boy he had played among the forested hills in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. When his family moved to Maryland, he continued an outdoor life as a surveyor. He lived all but a few years of his life on the frontier.

At the time of the Big Tree Treaty, the six-foot tall Ellicott, in his mid thirties, was already familiar with Western New York.

In September, 1797, shortly after Big Tree, Ellicott began preparing a boundary survey of the Holland Land Purchase. Pushing into the autumn forests near the mouth of the Genesee River, teams of surveyors headed west to Fort Niagara. Then they turned south to Lower Landing, and went on to Fort Schlosser and Buffalo. Stumbling through underbrush, they cut, measured, and marked boundaries until winter.

For two years surveying teams worked in the forests and swamps of Western New York laying out townships. In the spring of 1798, they laid out Lewiston and the Mile Strip. Then trouble hit the surveying teams. Mosquitoes from swamps brought men and horses down with malaria. Work almost stopped. Ellicott, however, brought in fresh men and horses and surveying teams worked into late autumn to complete the year's work. In 1799, they finished surveying Indian reservations and Ellicott was careful to see that the company got the best lands. By 1800, most of Western New York had been divided into ranges, townships, and lots.

The building of roads and mills encouraged settlement Although much surveying remained to be done, Joseph Ellicott became chief land agent for the Company. From his headquarters in Batavia he directed land sales in Western New York. He sponsored the building of taverns, roads, and mills to encourage settlement and advertised land sales in eastern cities, offering easy terms to land buyers. For twenty years Ellicott labored to carve settlements from the wilderness. He retired in 1820 and died six years later. Ellicott had left Niagara County well on the road to settlement. Few men have done more to develop Western New York.

What routes did pioneers follow to Niagara County?

Early settlers trickled into Niagara County by two main routes. The earliest pioneers used the water route. From Albany they poled and portaged up the Mohawk River to a point near Rome. Portaging to Wood Creek, they followed the creek to Lake Oneida. After crossing the lake, they drifted down the Oneida and Oswego Rivers to Lake Ontario, and then sailed west to Fort Niagara. From here they pushed on to Lewiston. Some struggled up the escarpment and trod the portage road southward to Fort Schlosser and then went on to Buffalo.

The land route was much the same as Route 5 today. Leaving Albany in canvas-topped wagons, pioneers bumped along the Mohawk River to Utica and on to Syracuse. Just beyond Auburn, they waded swamps north of Cayuga Lake and struggled into Geneva. Their route led west to Canandaigua. At the Avon ferry landing, they crossed the Genesee and went on to Batavia where they plunged through the Tonawanda Swamp and finally reached Lewiston.

Traveling these roads was heart-breaking toil. In the spring, wagon wheels and rain formed mudholes that reached the unbelievable depth of five feet or more. Pioneers had to fill these mammoth holes with logs and stones before their wagons could move west again. Spring rains also washed out whole sections of the road. These sections had to be repaired. Trees often blew down across the road and had to be cut and moved. Sometimes pioneers were lucky to travel a mile in a day.

Traveling conditions improved little in the summer. Wolves were still a constant threat. At night pioneers fed roaring fires to frighten them off. And day and night they slapped endlessly at whining mosquitoes that swarmed about in black clouds, bringing fever and sometimes death. Sometimes bloodsucking flies left exposed skin a bloody mass and drove horses into a blind panic. Rearing horses broke their harnesses and tipped wagons and scattered belongings along the trail.

Pioneers struggle to make a living

What was frontier life like?

Niagara County was opportunity Many settlers, mostly young people, who came to Niagara left Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont because of high taxes, rocky soil, and a general agricultural depression. Unable to sell goods, they gave up their farms and headed west for a new start. Others flocked to Niagara County for the abundant cheap and fertile land.

Settlers first bought land Land cost a pioneer one to five dollars an acre. He usually bought his land from Joseph Ellicott at the Holland Land Company office in Batavia. The company asked a ten percent down payment but often took less. And if a pioneer failed to make payments, the company let him stay on the land because he raised land values by clearing the forest. Sometimes, though, the company waited years for its money.

Ellicott usually gave a pioneer a rough map after the sale. The pioneer then built his log cabin and returned home. Later the whole family piled into the wagon and headed for their land. They dreamed perhaps of rolling pastures, fertile fields, good crops, and a fine comfortable home. But in spite of their eagerness, the dark, cool forest looked foreboding; and the black flies and mosquitoes took some of the magic from their dreams.

When the wagon jolted to a halt in the forest where the map showed their land to be located, they climbed out and the children's happy voices echoed in the woods. If the father had not already erected a cabin on the site, the family immediately started to work on a shelter. In an hour or so they had a three-sided framework of poles built and covered with canvas. The first few nights they kept fires roaring to protect the cow, hog, and oxen from wolves and bears. Not until they had built a sturdy shed were their animals safe.

Next they built cabins

With the lean-to up and the household goods stored, the work of raising a cabin began. From morning 'til night, axes rang in the forest and trees crashed to earth. And in spite of the cool winds, father and son sweated at their task. Trimming branches from the tree trunks, they chained the oxen to them and snaked the logs to the cabin site. Then the pioneer family held a log-raising bee. With the aid of neighboring settlers, they raised the log walls. Next they built a pole framework for a roof, shingling it with long strips of elm bark and tying saplings across the shingles to hold them in place.

Once the roof was on, pioneers breathed easier because they had shelter from storms. But the cabin was not finished. They still had to fill cracks in the log walls with wood chips and mud and then tamp the dirt floor flat and hard. Later, with the adz, they shaped logs into beams and planks for the floor. They had no glass, so they covered the windows with oiled paper. Their first log house seldom had a fireplace or chimney. For heating and cooking they dug a firepit in the dirt floor. Smoke escaped through a hole in the roof. In time they wove a fireplace of sticks and plastered it with mud.

Pioneers usually furnished their cabins with the iron kettle, bedding, and eating utensils they had brought in their wagons. They made tables, benches, buckets, plates, spoons, and other necessary things from the wood of the surrounding trees.



A pioneer farm on land purchased from the Holland Land Company.

**Then they cleared
land and planted
crops**

With the cabin up, the whole family turned out to clear land. Hour after hour father and son swung axes, and tree after tree toppled to the ground to be cut, piled, and burned. Day and night flames and smoke poured skyward from the clearing. And for weeks scorched hair and eyes red from smoke were common sights among the family.

Finally they cleared enough land for the first crops. Among tree stumps they planted corn, beans, pumpkins, squash, and potatoes. The sight of the first green shoots pushing from the earth drew the eager pioneer family running to the garden plot. All through the growing season they guarded crops against deer, rabbits, and other plant eaters and scanned the skies for rain. A crop failure meant hunger and possible starvation.

Getting enough food was always a problem on the frontier. Pioneers rarely brought enough food with them. They planned to live off the land until the following spring. In the summer this was fairly easy because the woods teemed with game, berries, and plants and creeks and lakes swarmed with fish. But in the hunger months of February and March it was a different story. Only the skillful hunters and woodsmen could live off the land then. Many early settlers had to eat roots and bark to keep alive, and many sickened and died in lonely snowbound cabins.

Food was plain

The pioneer family had little change in diet even when food was plentiful. Sitting on benches around their rough table they ate the same foods everyday—cornmeal mush, pork, beans, and potatoes. Only in season did they have fresh foods from garden or forest. What food they had was usually enough to keep the wise family alive and working hard.

**Pioneers worked
long and hard**

Pioneers had to make or raise almost everything they ate, wore, or used. Everyone had to work. Young and old alike toiled from dawn to dusk.

Women and girls sewed, washed and scrubbed; they made candles from animal fat or hunted pineknots to burn; they made soap by mixing boiling fat with homemade lye. They churned cream into butter and ground corn into meal; they made cloth from wool—washing and combing wool fibers straight, they twisted them into thread and wove cloth. They dried beans, squash, and pumpkins for winter, and in season gathered berries and plants in the forest. They tended the sick and cared for children.

Men and boys milked cows and chopped firewood. They trimmed and squared logs into planks and beams. They plowed, planted, and harvested; they fished, hunted, and trapped. They cut wool from sheep and slaughtered hogs for food and they built animal sheds and cared for livestock.

But even a skillful and hardworking family could not make everything it needed. Some things had to be bought. Pioneers sometimes bartered their crops to get the things they needed. They did however have three main sources of money—black salts, animal bounties, and brandy.

Wolves and bears caused widespread damage among livestock on the frontier. They even slaughtered stock near the cabin during daylight hours. In winter hungry wolf packs sometimes hunted men. So the town government paid bounty money to get rid of the wolves. The bounty for a wolf scalp was high, usually three to ten dollars, but sometimes it was as high as fifty dollars. Bounties on bears, foxes and wildcats however were not so high. Some families lived through the first year on bounty money.

Black salts was a product settlers made from wood ashes. After cutting and burning trees they gathered wood ashes in wooden tubs with holes in the bottom. They poured water on the ashes and collected the ash-water in large kettles. After boiling the water out, the hard, black, salt-like material left was black salts. We know it as potash or lye, and use it to make soaps and dyes.

Another important source of money was whiskey. Rye and corn are bulky crops and cost a great deal to ship hundreds of miles to eastern markets. After paying shipping costs pioneers had little money left. So they made their corn and rye into whiskey. Sometimes they built stills of their own. Whiskey was easy to ship and brought good prices.

Sickness and death were common on the frontier Pioneers drank much of the whiskey they made. They did this partly because they believed that alcohol in the blood prevented sickness. In some places drunkenness was a serious problem. But in spite of whiskey, sickness was common, especially during the hunger months of February and March. Lung fever (tuberculosis) and small-pox killed many, especially children.

But the most common sickness was "shakes" or "ague," today known as malaria. Swamps in Niagara County bred malaria-carrying mosquitoes. People weakened by hunger lacked strength to fight the disease. The old remedy of gunpowder mixed with whiskey did not help much, nor did sulphur and molasses. From time to time other diseases such as typhoid fever and cholera swept through the frontier and wiped out whole families. Sooner or later epidemics hit every frontier settlement. Children suffered more than adults. Only one in two ever reached the age of five.

Frontier families had little medical help. Doctors were scarce

and they knew little about medicines and diseases. The best a pioneer family could do was to make the sick comfortable and attempt to ease their suffering. With whiskey, sulphur, and a damp cloth, and perhaps Indian herbs, the frontier family sat out the sick watch, taking turns throughout the night. But the main burden of caring for the sick fell upon the mother. Worried and tired, she watched the final hours of the sick.

A serious illness usually meant death. Death came often on the frontier. A family buried its dead in blankets or animal skins. And the dead were buried deep, for wolves and other animals might dig them up. The pioneer father read a few words from the family Bible over the grave, which was marked with a slab of field stone.

Amusements were few But pioneer life was not all hard work and suffering. Frontier families did enjoy themselves.

The most common amusement was the "bee," generally called to help a neighbor. Not only did a "bee" give pioneers a chance to enjoy themselves but it also accomplished useful work. Frontier folks enjoyed many kinds of bees—quilting, house raising, tree cutting, husking bees, and others. Packing food and tools, the whole family piled into the wagon and headed for the neighbor holding a bee.

The husking bee was a favorite with young men and women. Neighbors gathered at harvest time to husk red, blue, and purple speckled corn. Boys and girls sat in rows facing each other and every time a boy or girl husked a red ear he or she had to kiss the person sitting opposite.

At most bees younger boys and girls played tag and hide and seek while older people worked, talked, and drank. Then in the cool autumn evening, after the husking was done, the feasting and merry-making began. Much of the fun at a husking bee was the eating. At harvest time food was plentiful. After the eating came the dancing. In a cleared space neighbors built a great log fire. As the fire burned brightly in the night, settlers forgot work and worry and whirled to lively tunes played by a frontier fiddler. They jumped and clapped and laughed and joked. Even smaller boys and girls danced.

But as the night wore on, one by one the younger children crawled into warm beds made in wagons. And as the fiddler played and older folks danced and laughed, the children slowly drifted off to sleep. Perhaps they did not even awaken as the wagons bounced home under a harvest moon.

Weddings, hunts, and visiting also helped to break the boredom of everyday life. But mostly pioneer life was loneliness and hard work.

How did pioneer life begin to change after 1805?

As more and more white-topped wagons rattled into Niagara County, pioneer life slowly changed, especially after 1805. In that year several leading men in Niagara County formed a transportation company. With markets easier to reach, pioneers began to prosper and money became less scarce.

Pioneers could now afford teachers and ministers. Their children could go to school and attend "meeting" on Sundays, at least in Lewiston. In the rest of Niagara County schools and churches did not become an important part of pioneer life until after the War of 1812.

Villages take root

How did a frontier settlement become a village?

Money also helped villages take root. When pioneers had money, they wanted to buy things they could not make or raise. And when settlers want to buy goods, traders appear to sell them. This explains how some earlier villages started. Usually a tavern appeared first—perhaps at the expense of Joseph Ellicott's Company. Then, nearby, other shops opened—blacksmith, cobbler, hardware dealer, harness maker—and eventually there were enough buildings to form a village.

Along with these shops came the country store. It sold everything from wagons to candy but it was more than a store. Settlers gathered for miles around on Saturdays to trade, exchange gossip, and argue politics. Several villages, including Youngstown, sprouted because of a country store and the country storekeeper was the most important man in the village for a long time. The country store was especially important in the later frontier life.

By 1812, Niagara County was well on the way to settlement. Yet, in their struggle to live, few pioneers saw the disaster of war that loomed in the near future. Soon all their hard work would end in smoke and flames. In the next chapter we shall see war destroy part of Niagara County.

6. War strikes the Niagara Frontier

Pioneers who had just begun to turn the wilderness into farms found themselves unprepared for war. They lacked equipment and leaders and, even worse, they lacked the desire to fight. But they did not know this as they marched gaily off to conquer Canada, with banners snapping in the breeze and drums and bugles stirring their hearts. They felt unbeatable then and waited for the chance to prove it. But when the British and Indians stormed towards them, they forgot parades and bands and conquest. They threw down their guns, sometimes without firing a shot, and fled in wild disorder. As the armies that had expected to conquer Canada ran in blind panic, Niagara County lay open and defenseless before the British, whose torches left black scars in some places where farms and settlements once stood.

But during the first shocking years of blundering, cowardice, and death, Americans were hammered into a tough army. In the final years of the war, American soldiers buckled down and in battles where they could have retreated they stayed and died. Finally they drove the British from American soil.

The War of 1812 begins

What were the causes of the war?

**British seized
American ships and
sailors**

The War of 1812 broke out in Europe, where the British and French fought each other in a death struggle. Napoleon's well-trained French army held Europe, and British hopes for victory lay in starving the French into surrender. British warships sailed the sea and captured vessels and supplies bound for France, and they didn't hesitate to include American ships among those they attacked.

The British fleets, however, never had enough men to keep the naval blockade at full strength. Sailors deserted in large numbers. Many of them found jobs on American merchant ships. Aboard a British warship sailors ate bad food, earned little money, and were mistreated and sometimes flogged. Besides, many men had been kidnapped by press gangs and forced into the British navy. Life on American ships, on the other hand, was much better. Food was wholesome, pay much better, and discipline was fairly easy. Few British sailors could resist this easier life if they had the chance to join the crew of an American ship.

Great Britain was aware of this and had warships halt American merchant ships and hunt out deserters. The scene was usually the same—the boom of a cannon, the yell to “heave-to,” and two ships rocking quietly on the ocean. While sails flapped slackly, the American ship was boarded. And under the muzzles of British cannon, seamen were taken from their comrades to fight in the British navy. The British claimed these seamen were British deserters. But they were not particular which sailors they seized. Any husky, skillful seaman was a prize.

The loss of cargoes and men to the British angered the Americans. In Washington, Congressmen, who became known as War Hawks, made violent speeches, waving clenched fists, and pounding desks. They demanded war if the British continued seizing American ships and men. Newspapers supported the War Hawks’ demand for freedom of the seas. The British seizing of American seamen and goods, then, was one cause of the War of 1812.

Westerners wanted war to end the Indian problem and to conquer Canada Another cause was land hunger and the desire to control the western fur trade. Americans pressing ever westward cast greedy eyes at Canada. The badly outnumbered British fought off American frontiersmen who were seeking land and fur. They used what help they could get and stirred up the Indians against the Americans. Along the frontier, small war parties struck at lonely farms. Indians burst suddenly from the forest. Wild screams and the crack of muskets rang in the air. Soon only smoke billowing skyward remained of what was once a pioneer home.

American frontiersmen were unable to fight both the British and the Indians. So they asked help from the United States Government. They had elected the young War Hawks to Congress because they had continually demanded war with Britain. Frontiersmen wanted war because they felt that Canada would fall into their hands with little fighting. But for many Americans it was not desire for Canada that brought the War of 1812, but the British seizing of American goods and seamen.

War came The British ignored American threats of war and continued to capture American ships. Their struggle with France worried them more than a war with the United States. Every new act by the British brought a growing howl of rage from the War Hawks in Congress. War was only a matter of time.

British attacks continued. Newspapers, politicians, and hot-headed War Hawks got their wish for war. Niagara Congressman Peter B. Porter and his fellow War Hawks celebrated with an Indian war dance. The cry was, “On to Canada! On to Canada!” Some western frontiersmen pushed through the forests to invade Canada even before war broke out.

War had come. Some Americans greeted the news with cheers and boasting. But they would have been less joyful if they had known the suffering, horror, and death that was soon to be their lot. And a great part of their misery was their own doing.

What were the American war plans?

Americans planned to invade Canada from three points under three leaders: General William Hull by way of Detroit, Michigan; General Henry Dearborn north through New York; and General Stephen Van Rensselaer across the Niagara River from Niagara County. General Hull blundered in blind fear and was overwhelmed by General Isaac Brock and Detroit fell to the British and Indians. General Dearborn reached the Canadian border but his militia refused to leave New York and his invasion failed. Meanwhile, General Van Rensselaer’s campaign in Niagara County was unsuccessful.

Niagara County looks to war

How did the people of Niagara feel toward war?

On June 26, 1812, the war news arrived and spread quickly to settlements and farms. Excited settlers streamed into nearby villages and war talk buzzed everywhere. In taverns, stores, and shops, people argued, questioned, and compared the British and American fighters. Newspapers, Congress, and local tavern crowds were sure Americans would easily smash the British armies. Young men especially, could hardly wait to show the British how to fight. They pictured an exciting and glorious war lasting a few weeks or months and then—home with a chest full of medals to be greeted by bands and admiring crowds. “On to Canada!”, echoed through the settlements and forests with an ever-increasing roar.

But not everyone wanted war. Settlers in Niagara County and the rest of New York had friends in Canada. Besides the breaking of old friendships, war also meant a loss of trade. But the voices of those who wanted Canada drowned out the voices of those desiring peace.

What were the armed forces of Niagara like?

The home guard and militia lacked training, discipline, and equipment

And so Niagara County, like the nation, began to raise men for the "militia," an army raised and paid by the state. The militia was the main part of the army that was to invade Canada. As a state army, it had little to do with the regular United States Army except in time of war when both forces worked together.

The militia had serious weaknesses as a fighting force. For one thing, officers appointed by the governor had had little war experience. In many cases they knew less than the men they trained and commanded. For another thing, the short, six-month enlistments lasted just long enough to train men. Then, when they were most valuable, the men left for home. As a result, most fighting was done by green troops who had never been under fire. A final weakness was that the militia refused to fight outside the border of their own state.

Some communities formed small armies of their own, a "home guard" of men and boys. The home guard was not much of a fighting force, either. The men usually elected the best liked men for officers, and few of the storekeepers or blacksmiths they chose had had military experience. If officers gave orders that the men did not like, they elected new officers. The men felt they had formed the guard and so they could do as they pleased.

The home guard took its training seriously but drilling was more like a field day than a military exercise. It was a ragged group that gathered Saturday mornings in the village square. Most of them carried equipment that had been used in the Revolution—rusted swords and bayonets, three-cornered hats and parts of uniforms and other odds and ends. Any piece of official military equipment was a source of pride. Few thought about things like tents, wagons, horses, and other items needed by an army.

Most men brought their own guns. Those without them marched around with sticks on their shoulders. But ragged or not, when the whole settlement turned out to watch, the home guard burned with pride as they marched back and forth in the dusty streets. After two or three hours of march and counter march, they broke ranks for lunch. Training was over for the day, but not the talking. In the afternoon they gathered in the tavern, the blacksmith's shop or the general store and compared their fighting ability with that of the British. Somehow the British always came out second best.

The militia and the home guard, then, were the main military forces for the protection of American settlements in Niagara County. Ill-trained, ill-equipped, and ill-disciplined mobs, they nevertheless expected to prove their courage and ability. Not until they saw the enemy did they realize the show was over. Then it was too late and they deserted under fire by the hundreds.

The militia and home guard could not get along with the United States Army regulars

A part of the regular United States Army was also in Niagara County. Trouble broke out between the regulars on one side and the militia and home guard on the other. The militia and home guard disliked the bossiness of the United States Army and refused to take orders. But there was other trouble also. The regulars laughed at the militia and home guard and looked upon them as stupid, make-believe soldiers who would break and run at the first shot. But like it or not, the small regular army needed help from the militia and home guard.



Canada repels Niagara invaders

How did the first attack upon Canada progress?

General Van Rensselaer took command at Niagara General Stephen Van Rensselaer of the New York State Militia took command in Niagara County in August, 1812. From his headquarters at Lewiston, he planned the

invasion of Canada. He decided to attack the small British fort on Queenston Heights, whose guns covered part of the Niagara River and the plain north of the escarpment. It was not an easy fort to take because it was surrounded by cliffs on the east and north and slopes on the west and south. His forces outnumbered the British three to one, however, and Van Rensselaer thought Queenston would be an easy victory. As the weeks passed, he gathered his forces and by autumn he was ready to strike.

General Brock outwitted General Van Rensselaer But facing Van Rensselaer was Isaac Brock, victor over General Hull at Detroit. Brock's spies reported that Van Rensselaer was gathering his forces for an invasion.

Brock posted sentries along the Niagara River to sound the alarm when Americans started to cross over. On October 10, Brock learned that Van Rensselaer's army was breaking camp. He knew the attack was coming, so he faked a counter attack at Fort Niagara to confuse Van Rensselaer. He also ordered his batteries of cannon at Fort George to bombard Fort Niagara. Some Americans in Fort Niagara deserted and fled into the woods. Van Rensselaer was now unable to get cannon from Fort Niagara to cover his invasion of Canada.

But Van Rensselaer decided to invade Canada anyway. His men moved down to the river bank during the night of October 10, 1812. But he had failed to order enough boats and the thirteen boats that he had lacked oars. His men milled around in the dark. It was nearly light before any of his soldiers started for Queenston. By daylight of the eleventh the boats would have made excellent targets for Brock's cannons so Van Rensselaer called off the attack.

For the next two days Van Rensselaer's yelling and swearing militia officers lined up boats and made sure the men knew their assigned places. On October 12, again under the cover of night, General Van Rensselaer ordered an assault. Early next morning, his troops crossed the swirling Niagara River and landed at Queenston. Their landing was no surprise. Brock had been watching Van Rensselaer's preparations for two days. And while the

Americans fought the river current, Brock's soldiers had them in their musket sights.

Brock's outnumbered British troops held Van Rensselaer's soldiers to a small foot-hold by the river. By daylight, a stream of American wounded was arriving at Lewiston. The invasion temporarily stalled and both sides waited for reinforcements.

Van Rensselaer's position was dangerous. Brock's regulars stood firm on Queenston Heights and the American landing forces faced a constant threat from British cannons. Besides, Brock himself was marching reinforcements up from Fort George. Van Rensselaer's army had two choices: retreat and face cannon fire while crossing the river, or make one last attempt to take Queenston Heights.



One of the enemies of the frontier farmer in early Western New York — the wolf.

Captain Wool and the United States Army regulars took Queenston Heights, October 13, 1812

The Americans decided to attack the heights. Captain Wool of the United States Army, with two hundred regulars, crawled along the river bank to a position where the escarpment rears sharply from the river. Wool gambled that the British would not have the escarpment fortified. He and his regulars hauled themselves up the cliffs using scrub trees and brush as hand-holds. They gained the top safely. Wool's guess was right. The British soldiers, cannons, and trenches faced down the slopes away from the cliff.

Wool's regulars hit the British forces from the rear and drove them from the heights. Now in control there, Wool waited for American reinforcements. If the Americans were to hold this important point against the coming attack, they needed help. At first none came.

As the autumn afternoon wore on, Brock's reinforcements arrived from Fort George. They stormed the heights repeatedly. In one of these charges Brock fell with a death wound. Captain Wool beat off the repeated attacks but his situation was becoming desperate. Many of his men had fallen before British musket fire, his ammunition was low, and he himself was badly wounded. Besides, more British troops were on the way to join those at Queenston.

The New York Militia refused to reinforce Wool and Scott Finally Colonel Winfield Scott taking command, led three hundred Americans to join Wool. One look at the condition of the tiny American force on the heights convinced Scott that without reinforcements the heights could not be held. The American line was too thin to stop a determined charge even with the help of his men. Scott knew that if the British broke the American lines at any point he had no reserves to throw into the break. While the Americans on the heights faced certain disaster, large numbers of New York militia just across the river, camped minutes away. But the militia refused to leave New York State: first, because the battle was lost, and second, there were not enough boats to move a sizeable number of troops across.

From Queenston Heights, Scott watched approaching British and Mohawk reinforcements. He heard the faint ruffle of drums on the still autumn air as the long column of redcoats crawled toward Queenston. On both sides of the column, swarms of Indians looped through the bright-colored forests.

Americans lost the Battle of Queenston Heights Across the river in Lewiston several thousand American militia watched the final battle. The British and Indian reinforcements joined their comrades at Queenston, formed lines, and charged up the slopes. Slowly, stubbornly, the Americans gave way under the heavy pounding. The British charge smashed into the American line. It buckled and then collapsed and the Americans withdrew toward the cliffs. Backed against the edge, they could retreat no further. They died as they stood firing at charging British and Indians.

Those not killed plunged off the cliffs to the river bank in a last desperate attempt to escape. Even those still alive were trapped. The men who had landed the troops had taken the boats and fled back to Lewiston. Crowded to the water's edge, pounded, bloody, and helpless, Colonel Scott and his men could do nothing but surrender. Scott was later released in an exchange of prisoners.

What happened during the second attack upon Canada?

Americans captured Fort George Eight months after the Battle of Queenston Heights, Americans struck Fort George. This fort protected the area around the mouth of the Niagara River from American invasion. This time General Henry Dearborn commanded the Americans. Dearborn planned carefully. He gathered a large and well-equipped army. He ordered more boats to carry his army across the mouth of the river to Canada, and had the aid of the United States fleet on Lake Ontario. By spring Dearborn was ready to attack.

On May 27, 1813, Dearborn's forces swept into Canada while cannons in Fort Niagara and on the United States fleet blasted Fort George. When the cannons stopped firing, Americans about Fort George charged forward into the sputtering fire of British muskets. They flung themselves at the walls of the fort and broke through gaps made by the cannons. By noon it was over. The American flag floated quietly over Canadian soil. But it would have been better for Niagara County if this attack had failed. After the battle, Dearborn marched eastward with most of his army to make another invasion of Canada. General McClure with the militia remained to hold Fort George.

Through the summer and autumn the Americans held the fort. Then in December, 1813, McClure got wind of a large force of British and Mohawks marching to retake Fort George. McClure worried over his lack of reinforcements. On December 10, he decided to retreat from Canada.

McClure foolishly burned Newark At McClure's orders, defenseless Newark, (now Niagara-on-the-Lake), also disappeared in flames that wintry day of December thirteenth. The angry people of Newark stood helplessly in the snow watching the Americans burn their homes. As they shuddered before the icy wind sweeping off Lake Ontario, they wondered how they would stay alive. After this fateful day's work, General McClure recrossed the river. Niagara would pay a dreadful price at British hands for McClure's blunder.

Staring at Newark's smoking ruins, the British soldiers swore to burn American settlements across the river. Three forts guarding the American side of the Niagara River were Fort Niagara, tiny Fort Gray on Lewiston Heights, and Fort Schlosser at Niagara Falls. If these forts fell, most of the American settlements would be defenseless. Six days after the burning of Newark, the British struck.

The American frontier suffers

How did the British avenge the burning of Newark?

The British took Youngstown and Fort Niagara

One night, a week before Christmas (December 18, 1813), British and Mohawks crossed the Niagara River and landed at Five Mile Meadow just south of Fort Niagara. At four o'clock the next morning part of the force led by Colonel Murray, moved silently toward darkened Fort Niagara. In order not to alert the fort, not a shot was fired. Tomahawk, scalping knife, and bayonet cut down the sentries.

Many prisoners at Fort Niagara were killed

Meanwhile, soldiers at the nearby fort slumbered quietly through the cold December morning. Parts of the walls were left unguarded and the main gate was partly open. While sentries huddled inside to keep warm, British and Mohawks slipped through the darkness to the fort. At a whispered command, Indians tomahawked the few sentries on guard and poured into the main drill area before a shot was fired. When the alarm sounded, troops groggy with sleep hardly picked up weapons before the Indians leaped upon them. The fort fell quickly. Almost four hundred Americans surrendered. But seizing the fort did not satisfy the British for the burning of Newark. They turned the Mohawks loose. The Indians butchered sixty-seven helpless prisoners. Finally the slaughter stopped. Again the fort was quiet.

The British now held the most important fort on the American side of the river. Only small Fort Gray and Fort Schlosser remained.

The British and Indians overran Fort Gray and Lewiston

After capturing Fort Niagara, Colonel John Murray fired a cannon to signal General Phineas Riall and his army which had crossed earlier. Hearing the signal, Riall and his Mohawks moved on Lewiston and Fort Gray. They were later joined by the force from Five Mile Meadow.

The attack on Lewiston was a horror repeated many times as British and Indians burned American settlements. And the destruction of Lewiston and the story of the Gillet family give a good picture of what the British and Indian attacks were like during the winter of 1813.

The Gillet family ex- perienced the horror of Indian warfare

The night of December 18, 1813, Mrs. Gillet was alone with the four younger children—Orville, ten; Jervis, seven; Alfred, four; and the baby. Her husband, Solomon, and

their oldest boy, Miles, had reported to Fort Gray to guard Lewiston against the expected attack by British and Indians.

Night comes early in December and soon after supper Mrs. Gillet put the children to bed. She left the bedroom door partly open so she could hear them if they called. Then she sat before the fire knitting while firelight played on the log walls of her home. From the ceiling hung ears of corn, dried venison, and pumpkin rings. It was quiet before the fire, except for the ticking of the grandfather clock and the crackling of burning logs.

She felt uneasy without her husband and Miles nearby. And she worried about the children as they slept quietly in the other room. Like most people of Niagara County she knew McClure had burned Newark and she expected the British to strike back. As the grandfather clock ticked toward midnight she dozed in the chair; the knitting slipped from her hands. It was a restless sleep that did not last long and she awakened, still feeling uneasy. Again she dozed.

Down the river, men waited for the cannon signal from Fort Niagara. British and Indians crouched in the dark winter morning, their breath steaming in the December air. Their faces were tense and their ears strained for the cannon sound. They grunted or mumbled as they squatted impatiently in the cold. Their officers walked about on frozen snow that crunched underfoot. They all waited for the sound for action—the time when their tomahawks and scalping knives would cut down the people of Lewiston.

When the far-off boom of the cannon reached them, officers gave low-voiced commands. Silently, swiftly, they moved toward Lewiston. Meanwhile the force at Five Mile Meadow tomahawked and scalped the few families at Youngstown, put homes to the torch and then moved toward Lewiston.

Back in Lewiston, sometime toward morning, the faint boom of the cannon brought Mrs. Gillet wide awake from her fitful dozing. She awoke her ten year old son Orville. His warm feet stung on the cold floor as he stood dressing quickly in the dark. With his father and Miles gone, it was his job to help with the milking and other chores. The sky had a faint touch of gray as Orville, rubbing sleep from his eyes, followed his mother outside. Cold nipped his fingers and cheeks. On the way to the barn, his low shoes squeaked on the frozen snow. And he could hear Brindle and Suky moving around in the barn, impatient to be milked. Once inside, Orville warmed as he milked with a steady rhythm.

They had just finished milking when a Mohawk war-cry echoed from the river. They dropped the milk pails. One pail tipped

over and warm, steaming milk spilled onto the dirt floor. Terrified, Mrs. Gillet started for the cabin and her sleeping children, with Orville close behind.

Three Indians came charging toward them as they were leaving the barn. They shoved Orville and his mother back into the barn. Orville and his mother stared wide-eyed as two Indians began ripping the barn apart looking for whiskey. The Indian guarding them picked up the partly filled pail and gulped the rich, foamy milk.

When the Indian's face was hidden by the pail, Orville slipped out of the barn. Keeping haystacks between himself and the Indians, he started for the woods. He ran as only terror can make a boy run. A minute or two passed before the Indians saw he was gone. Two Indians started after him, but he had a long lead. They halted and fired, but he was out of musket range. They soon gave up the chase and returned to the slaughter at Lewiston.

Running and then walking, and then running again, Orville headed inland away from the river and Lewiston. Snow in the woods slowed his running. He kept looking backward for a sign of Indians. He imagined them lurking behind every large tree ready to pounce upon him.

After three or four miles, he came to a log house. Breathless, stumbling with exhaustion, he burst into the house. It was empty. The owners had fled, leaving their still-warm breakfast on the table. Orville sank to the floor gasping air. He glanced fearfully around the room and noticed drops of blood on the floor. Looking at his feet, he saw more blood. The sharp crust of ice on the snow had cut his ankles. In his terror he had felt no pain. He tried to stop the oozing blood.

Orville rested long enough to catch his breath. Then, stuffing his mouth with cornbread, he continued his flight. Terror of Indians on his trail kept him fleeing most of the day. He passed other deserted cabins with doors open and belongings left about by fleeing settlers. He spent the night in one. Sick, cold, weak, he dropped off to a troubled sleep. Next morning, as soon as he could see, he was on his way, continually glancing backward. At nightfall of the second day he staggered to the door of a Methodist minister. The minister helped the ragged and exhausted boy into the safety of his home.

Back in Lewiston, the Indians pushed his mother from the barn to the cabin. They tore, smashed, and ripped until they found a jug of whiskey. Mrs. Gillet knew about drunken Indians and expected to feel a tomahawk or knife at any moment. She didn't know how

many more minutes the children would be safe.

Through the open door she saw a British officer and decided to seek his protection. As the Mohawks waited eagerly for their turn at the whiskey jug, she sprang for the door with the two youngest children in her arms. Seven-year-old Jervis followed. Jumping to the door, the Indians threw their muskets to their shoulders and fired. Jervis stumbled and fell. In seconds, one Indian scalped him and dangled the scalp in his mother's face. The officer, who saw the act, shielded her from more harm but did not release her.

For several days she lived in terror, with little sleep and no food. One night, while drunken Indian guards slept, she escaped. Carrying her baby and taking four year old Alfred by the hand she started inland. She decided to make her way to her father's farm, near the Hudson River, almost three hundred miles away.

Without food or money, and with two small children, she set out on foot through the deep snow of the forest. Riding with settlers when she could, and accepting food and shelter from friendly pioneers, she struggled eastward. After two months of hardship, she reached her father's farm near the Hudson.

In June, 1814, the Methodist minister visited her father's farm and told her about Orville. When the war ended in 1814, her husband was released from prison. He returned to Lewiston and found his home charred ruins, his wife and children gone. He decided to see his wife's family and headed eastward. Finally he reached the farm near the Hudson River.

They never saw their other son, Miles, again. He was killed the morning Lewiston was attacked. After the war, the Gillets, like hundreds of others, returned to Niagara County to rebuild homes and farms.

We have seen what war was like in Lewiston. However, Lewiston was not the only place attacked that day, December 19, 1813. Much of the rest of Niagara County also went up in flames.

Ridge Road became a place of horror and death Another place of horror that day was the Ridge Road, the main escape route east from Lewiston. Along the Ridge Road hundreds of settlers fled in terror of their lives

—old and young, women and children. Fleeing from their beds, many were half dressed, without shoes and stockings in the snow. Walking, running, riding, they streamed down the road on horseback, in wagons, and in sleighs, each was trying to pass the other. Wagons and sleighs overturned, spilling riders into the snow. They rose and pushed onward in a blind panic to escape the Mohawks chasing them.

Mohawk hatchets and scalping knives ended the lives of those who fell behind. For eight miles the horror continued. Many who escaped owed their lives to the friendly Tuscarora Indians. The Tuscaroras hid among rocks and in thickets and slowed down the Mohawks by yelling and shooting.

After it was all over, the road from Lewiston was a nightmare. Some broken wagons and sleighs were tipped over in the snow; belongings were scattered over the road. Dead and dying animals lay in their blood. Bodies of some settlers, tomahawked and scalped, sprawled in twisted shapes upon the snow. And wolves started to feed upon the dead.

And so the area was destroyed. The American soldiers could not stop this slaughter. The home guard and militia were not prepared to fight. Many times green troops fled at the sight of the enemy without firing a shot. And the militia was the first to flee, not even waiting to warn others. No forts . . . no army . . . it was a sad day for the Americans. Settlers paid a dreadful price for not being prepared.

Manchester and Fort Schlosser were destroyed The enemy moved along the Lake Road, robbing and burning. They spread destruction as far east as Eighteen Mile Creek and up the creek to Van Horn's mills. From Lewiston, they swept southward to Manchester. They burned it along with nearby Fort Schlosser. Americans offered some fight at Manchester. But General Riall and his Mohawks drove them southward toward Buffalo. Riall finally halted at Tonawanda Creek.

More horror befell the American settlers. With no armies or sheriffs to stop them, gangs of men roamed the woodlands, seeking lonely cabins and settlers unable to protect themselves. The gangs robbed them of their valuables.

By Christmas of 1813, most American frontier settlements lay in black ruins. Within three weeks of the burning of Newark by General McClure, the British had their revenge. The result of years of heart breaking work by thousands of people was destroyed in a few days. Homes, belongings, food, animals, and human life were gone in billowing clouds of smoke.

The war ends

What success did the United States have?

The year 1814 was a brighter year for the Americans. They had learned some terrible lessons in 1812 and 1813. Blundering,

stupid, and cowardly commanders had been swept out of the militia. Tough fighting men of judgment replaced them. The militia also lost their foolish notions of glory and parades. Slowly, under fire, they shaped into fighting men. Each time they saw British and Indians, they waited a little longer before running. Soon they stopped running altogether.

In 1814 militia men proved themselves in battle. New Yorkers under General Jacob Brown refused to retreat under terrific pounding in the bloody battle of Lundy's Lane, Ontario. They stayed on the field and mauled the British until both sides withdrew, exhausted. At Chippewa, Ontario, the British received another shock as Americans fought with a fury that sent British forces reeling backward. And Americans fought bravely and well under General Peter B. Porter and Colonel Winfield Scott in other battles.

What did the peace treaty settle?

The end of the war came in 1814 with the signing in Belgium of the Treaty of Ghent. The United States did not get Canada. Nor did the United States force the British to agree to stop seizing American cargoes and seamen. But the British had defeated the French and their need for seamen and the necessity of preventing supplies from reaching France had passed. The British did bring an end to Indian raids in the West.

After the war, settlers returned to Niagara County. In the next two chapters, we will read how they rebuilt homes, shops, and farms, and how some of the present villages, cities, and towns grew up.

7. Settlements take root along lake, river, and creek

Most towns in Niagara County started beside lakes, rivers, or creeks. Settlements took root along waterways for a number of reasons. For one thing there was the need for transportation. In a roadless wilderness, traveling by water was quicker, easier, and safer than by land. Another reason for settling near creeks and rivers was water power, which for many years turned the wheels of early flour and saw mills. And there was a final reason why settlers lived by waterways, although it seems strange to us today.

Many settlers were uneasy about living in the forest. They had come from areas of the East where neighbors were within shouting

distance. In the thick and gloomy forests of Niagara County it was a different story. Neighbors were few and distant. With the dark and threatening forest pressing in on them, they felt safer living close to the water's edge.

Lake Ontario invites settlement

The largest body of water touching Niagara County is Lake Ontario. The lake was a comfort to early settlers. When gazing northward, they were not so depressed by the dark and strangling forest at their backs. For miles, water and sky spread before them, finally meeting the horizon. The lake was a comforting bond with other struggling settlements hugging the shore.

What settlements grew along the shore?

After 1805 Somerset and Olcott were founded Near the northeast shore of Niagara County lies Somerset, among the apple and peach orchards close by the lake. But in 1810, when Jacob Fitts tracked into the area, it was woods and swamps. Fitts, filled with dreams of a new home, came west from New Jersey. Within a few years after he arrived, others followed and built their cabins south of his farm. These settlers cut Somerset village from the forest. Some years later, David Barker settled in the woods a mile south of Somerset. The site is now the village of Barker.

From Somerset a narrow beach of pebbles and scattered drift wood winds westward to Eighteen Mile Creek; so named because of its distance from Fort Niagara. Long ago, the creek, pouring from the forest into Lake Ontario, formed a small bay. Here was a small harbor, edged with cattails, that would shelter boats and docks from pounding lake storms, and the creek would provide water power. At the mouth of this creek Olcott grew up.

In 1807, two Canadians, William Chambers and John Brewer, sailed into Eighteen Mile Creek. They felled trees and raised cabins close to its mouth. The following year, Burgoyne Kemp, and a small party herding cattle and sheep, also trailed to the creek mouth. And in 1810 another pioneer, James Van Horn, arrived. The scattered cabins they raised formed a settlement called Kempville, which was later re-named Olcott.

Olcott showed early signs of becoming an important village. The creek made a good harbor. And the lake was a route for shipping timber and crops to markets in Canada and eastern New York State. By 1814, Olcott had a flourmill and a sawmill, a general store, ships' docks, and a tavern. It could even boast of a doctor, a person greatly needed in early settlements.

Despite these early signs of growth, Olcott gradually became less important. In 1825, the Grand Erie Canal was completed. It reduced the role of the lake as a trade route. Thus Olcott and its harbor became of less importance. Since the completion of the canal, Olcott has remained a small village. Its beaches, however, draw many visitors every summer.

Burt and Newfane began near Eighteen Mile Creek

A mile south of Olcott is the village of Burt. This village owes its birth to the Van Horn family. They raised a sawmill, a flourmill, and later a woolen mill. They dammed the creek to provide water power to run their mills. The mills and the group of cabins about them became known as Van Horn's Mills. Later the name was changed to Burt, in honor of Burt Van Horn, who played an important part in the history of the settlement and the county.

Three miles south of Burt, Newfane also edges Eighteen Mile Creek. Arthur Patterson cleared land here in 1823 and later sold it to new settlers. Otis Hathaway, surveyor and land buyer, laid out the village. It was first known as Charlotte, in honor of Charlotte Davis, daughter of an early settler, George Davis. Later it was called Charlotteville, and finally, about 1900, Newfane.

During the War of 1812, British and Indians burned most of the cabins and settlements along the Eighteen Mile Creek, including Newfane. A house near the Van Horn mill escaped because the Indians decided to drink brandy before burning it. Following the war, settlers rebuilt the village. Other mills gradually joined the Van Horn mills in Newfane. In time the Charlotte woolen mills, (now the Lockport Felt Company), under the leadership of the late William H. Lee, became the most important industry in Newfane.

Wilson's harbor contributed to its growth

Seven miles west of Olcott, two branches of Twelve Mile Creek flow into Lake Ontario. Steep banks rim the inlet and provide one of the best natural harbors along the lake in Niagara County. Close by the creek mouth is the village of Wilson.

Named for its founder, Reuben Wilson, the village is located on the East Branch of Twelve Mile Creek. Reuben and his family left Massachusetts in 1807 and settled near Toronto, Canada. In Canada, Wilson made friends with the John Eastman family and Gilbert Purdy. Together the tiny group faced the wilderness. Three years of endless toil and suffering did not seem to make life more comfortable. They began talking of moving to New York where conditions might be better. Finally, Wilson, Eastman, and Purdy decided to move to Niagara County. They built flat-bottomed boats to cross Lake Ontario, and they gathered their belongings. 61

In April the lake was free enough of ice for a safe crossing. On April 10, 1810 they set sail, planning to row and sail around the western end of Lake Ontario to Niagara County. In the early morning mist their boats, crowded with tools, animals, furniture, and excited children, glided out onto the lake.

The west wind carried a touch of spring as it filled the sails. Gradually home and shore narrowed to a thin line and dropped below the horizon. In the East, an orange red sun climbed slowly from the lake. Southward, the glistening water spread before them. Sometimes the boats pitched and rolled. Waves broke against the sides, drenching the voyagers. The rigging creaked under the strain of the pressing wind. One of the boys sprawled in the bow of Wilson's boat, watching for ice in the blue-green water. Reuben, gripping the tiller, carefully searched the sky for signs of a sudden storm. His wife held the children close by, fearing they might tumble into the lake.

For weeks they rowed and sailed around the western end of the lake. At night they glided ashore, camping on strange and lonely beaches. Then late one June afternoon, a faint blue line appeared on the horizon; it darkened to green as they neared shore. Sailing closer, they noticed amid the green a hazy grey outline that turned out to be the stone walls of Fort Niagara.

At Fort Niagara, Reuben spent his last fifty cents for supplies. A few days later, the small group sailed eastward toward Twelve Mile Creek and the land purchased from the Holland Land Company. They glided along the shore lined with steep banks and oak forests. The men searched the banks for a landing while the children's excited voices broke the stillness and echoed along the lake shore.

Pushing their flat-bottomed boats along the lake shore east of Twelve Mile Creek, they found a landing and unloaded. For shelters, while they built cabins, they used the boats. Turning them upside down, they set them on poles and enclosed the sides with bark and boughs. In raising their cabins they had help from Stephen Sheldon, who had settled nearby in 1809. Gilbert Purdy moved further east, so the Wilsons and Eastmans worked through a sweltering summer clearing land and planting crops. By fall they had the cabins up and crops growing. After the fall harvest, it looked as if their food would carry them through the first winter.

In the next year more settlers came, drawn by the lake that was
62 such a good trade route. The lake was soon a highway for Wilson

farmers. They piled their boats with produce and then sailed hundreds of miles northeast to markets in Montreal, Canada, returning with boats low in the water with supplies. Another market for Wilson farmers was Hamilton, Ontario, where they had their grain ground into flour.

More families moved in and the village lost the raw look of the first years. But Wilson's growth came to a sudden stop in 1812. The British, sweeping eastward, burned it and took Reuben and some other villagers prisoners. The British released Wilson and the others eight days later. Then Reuben and the other settlers trudged eastward, away from the fighting. Within a few weeks, however, they returned to their homes and began rebuilding those that were destroyed.

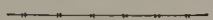



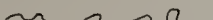

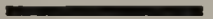
Following the War of 1812, starvation threatened many of the new families in Wilson. Crops failed in 1816 because of freezing weather in July and August. Old-timers had little enough food for their own families and could not sell food to new settlers. But somehow most settlers lived through the bad years. The year 1818 brought abundant crops and a flood of new settlers. Pioneer farmers then had crops to feed the newcomers until they could harvest their own crops.

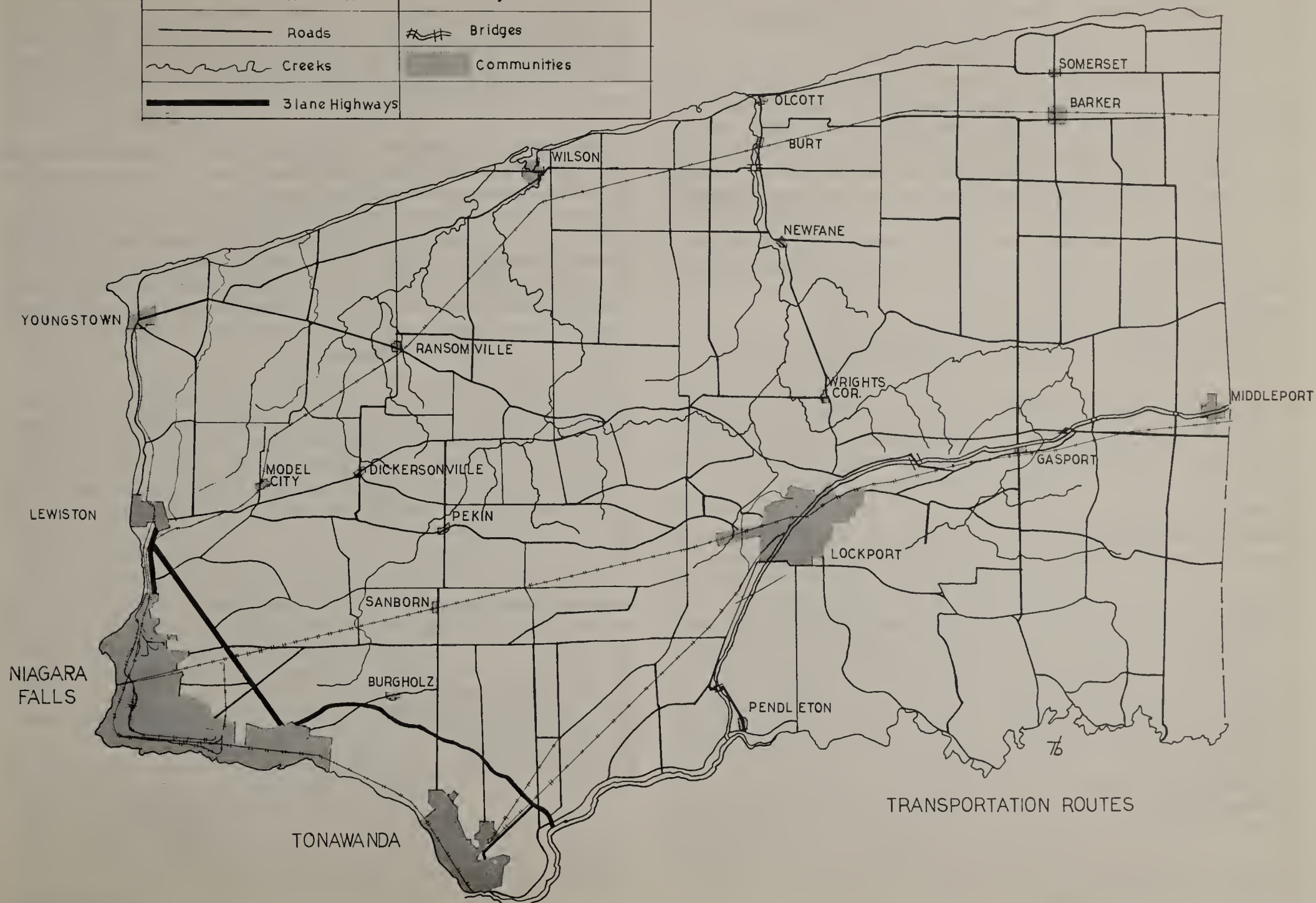
When the war and the starvation period passed, the settlement grew more rapidly. The Wilson family had an important part in this growth. In 1816, Wilson bought Sheldon's sawmill, built the year before. Luther, Reuben's son, operated the mill and built a house nearby. He increased the mill's output of lumber. With the lumber from his mill, Luther started a boat-building industry. Not only did he ship his own lumber to Montreal, but he also shipped other settlers' products as well. The Wilsons also opened a general store to serve the surrounding settlers.

Education in Wilson began in 1815. By that year enough families had arrived to start a school. Children went to school in a deserted log shack. Dr. Warner, town physician, was also school master. Thirty-one years later, in 1846, Luther Wilson helped organize the Wilson Collegiate Institute. In 1869, the Institute became Wilson Union School, and about 1900 the Union School became Wilson High School.

As with other towns along the lake shore, the finishing of the Erie Canal in 1825 decided the future of Wilson. Farmers now had closer markets for crops than Canada, although Luther Wilson's shipping industry was still important. Wilson has remained a farming community with some light industry. However, many people think the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Niagara Power Project will bring changes and new growth to Wilson.

KEY

	Railroads		Barge<Erie> Canal
	Roads		Bridges
	Creeks		Communities
	3 lane Highways		



Settlements develop on the banks of the Niagara River

West of Wilson, the lake shore, cut by several more creeks, finally reaches the Niagara River. Signs of the river appear before the river itself does. A half mile or so off the river mouth, lake and river roll together over a sand bar, forming a line of foaming water. And near the foot of Fort Niagara's walls, the water, carrying branches and other things from the river, pounds against the foot of the walls.

Just south of the fort, the mighty river rushing north carved a small harbor from the sloping bank. On the banks above this harbor is Youngstown.

What is the history of Youngstown?

Soon after Americans took Fort Niagara from the British in 1796, a number of shacks were built nearby. The settlement was a stop-over for travelers, boatmen, traders, ex-soldiers, and drovers. They were a rough, bearded, and dirty bunch who spent their spare time drinking, gambling, and fighting. But gradually settlers with families arrived. Under the influence of women, shacks and trash heaps nearby disappeared, and the settlement tamed a bit.

Cooke's ferry and Young's store helped give the town its start Lemuel Cooke was one of the early settlers at Youngstown. Cooke joined the army for free transportation to Niagara County. He served his army hitch at Fort Niagara and stayed on after his discharge. Cooke operated a ferry between Fort Niagara and Newark, across the river, until 1802, when he moved to Lewiston. However, Youngstown got its name from John Young, not from Lemuel Cooke. Young was a Britisher who had fought Americans in the Revolution. After the war he settled in Newark. He owned a store and property in Youngstown. Settlers from the surrounding woods shopped at Young's store and gradually the settlement took the name Youngstown.

The present town site was the farm of Isaac Swain The village of Youngstown began in 1805 when New York State sold lots in the Mile Strip, the strip of state-owned land a mile wide along the Niagara River. Alexander Millar bought land on the present site of Youngstown. In 1807 he sold it to Isaac Swain, a pioneer farmer.

Youngstown's early years were lively By 1807 Youngstown showed the usual signs of growth. River Road, forming the main street, was a ribbon of dust edged with grass and without sidewalks. Hitching rails stood in front of log buildings along the streets. Young's store, DeWolfe's wagon shop, Campbell's tavern, a blacksmith shop, and a school house stood close to where River Road and the Youngstown-Lockport Road now meet. Below the steep river banks, boats piled with goods docked in the small harbor.

On Saturdays, settlers, doing the week's trading, crowded Youngstown's dusty streets with their horses and wagons. At DeWolfe's wagon shop, Campbell's tavern, and on the street corners, knots of traders, boatmen, and settlers exchanged stories, laughed, drank, and sometimes fought. Women did their shopping with their children clutching at their skirts. Sometimes they gathered at Young's store, or in the streets, and passed on bits of gossip. Older children wandered to the docks to stare in wonder at the boats from far-away lake ports, thinking perhaps of questions to ask William Coggsell, the schoolmaster.

Although the town was a busy place on Saturday, it could boast of only six or seven families by 1812. And by December of the next year there were none. Youngstown went up in flames during the War of 1812. Colonel Murray burned the village. Some families living on the outskirts of town escaped. Isaac Swain's family was one of these. That December dawn of 1813, William Swain, Isaac's son, was startled from sleep by the crack of muskets at Fort Niagara. The Swain family fled, packing what they could in a sled. As they fled eastward they yelled warnings to others along the way.

Industries developed after the War of 1812 Youngstown was slowly rebuilt after the war. In the 1830's, the shipping of oak to Montreal was the main industry. Seven ships, built at Youngstown, carried goods to other lake ports. When the oak forest disappeared, settlers turned to wheat farming. Then flourmills and tanneries, run by water power, replaced ship building and lumbering.

It became a village in 1854 In 1844, Jesse P. Haines, surveyed and mapped the village. But not until ten years later was Youngstown officially incorporated as a village. Since then, it has changed little in size. Today Youngstown is a quiet town of tree-lined streets and neat homes. People living there work in Niagara Falls or in nearby towns. The Youngstown Yacht Club now occupies part of the bay where boats

once docked. On summer weekends Youngstown is crowded with people going yachting or fishing, or on their way to visit nearby Fort Niagara.

The River Road runs southward from Youngstown along the river bank, past La Belle Famille where the French lost an empire in 1759, past Five Mile Meadow where Murray landed in 1813, and then up a small rise finally entering Lewiston.

What accounts for Lewiston's growth?

It was favorably located

More than is true of most towns, time and place shaped the life of Lewiston. In a time of roadless wilderness, it stood by a waterway that led into the heart of a continent. For a long time it was the center of trade routes. The village was also the best landing on the lower Niagara River, because it is the only break for miles in the fifty foot high banks. Beyond Lewiston toward the Falls, these banks tower over three hundred feet, forming a canyon alive with boiling rapids. Thus boats coming up river on the American side have to dock at Lewiston.

Lewiston, as the lower landing of the portage, had a colorful history long before Americans turned it into a boom town. Senecas sent Neuters fleeing and burned Onguiaahra in 1651. For seventy years little happened on the site. Then in 1720 the French quietly seized it. The French Portage Master, Joncaire, raised *Magazin Royal* and began French trade on the portage. Six years later the French built Fort Niagara at the mouth of the river and held it until the British took over in 1759. John Stedman now replaced Joncaire as Portage Master and set about improving the portage to carry more trade. Captain Montessor built an inclined railway up Lewiston Hill, increasing trade. Thus Lewiston, or Lower Landing as it was then called, became an important trade center. But not until American settlers came did Lewiston or Lower Landing grow rapidly.

Men with ambition settled there

During the period between 1783 and 1796, a few American drovers trickled into the raw frontier settlement. In the 1780's Mid-
daugh opened a log tavern to serve frontiersmen and Indians. In the late 1780's Silas Hopkins, his son, and Benjamin Barton each drove cattle to Fort Niagara and later settled at Lewiston. In the 1790's Joshua Fairbanks and his wife set up a tavern and store at Lower Landing. About the same time, Jonas Harrison—lawyer, teacher, and customs collector—unpacked his law books and offered his services to the settlement.

Five years later, in 1798, Joseph Ellicott had the Mile Strip surveyed and laid out the town of Lewiston. Soon afterward came the Cookes, who were businessmen, lawyers, and lawmakers. The Cookes added fame and numbers to the growing frontier settlement. The Hustlers also were an interesting part of the settlement. Tom and his wife Kate, supposed models for the tavern keepers in James Fenimore Cooper's book, *The Spy*, ran a lively tavern.

After 1800 other settlers pushed into the settlement, seeking land. But the land was still owned by New York State. So Joseph Annin also surveyed the Mile Strip for the State in 1803. Two years later he divided the village into lots. Land buyers, like Alexander Millar, snapped up choice lots at auction. Most lots were soon sold. Enough settlers had now arrived to form a village. They named their settlement Lewis Town, in honor of Governor Morgan Lewis, who signed the bill creating Lewis Town. The two dozen or so villagers now looked forward proudly to becoming a great city, especially if the planned canal linking Lake Erie and Lake Ontario passed through Lewiston. They also thought the portage would bring about growth if it could be repaired and put into operation again.

The Porter, Barton, and Company's revival of the Niagara Portage made it a boom town

While Lewiston was being settled, the portage that had caused so much fighting among the French, Indians, and British lay largely unused. The portage was part of the Mile Strip. No one could take over the portage without permission from New York State. But in 1805 all this changed. Augustus and Peter B. Porter, Major Benjamin Barton, and Joseph Annin got the right to be the only ones to use the portage. The company they formed now held the land link in the waterway the French and British had fought over. In 1805 the portage was still the key to transportation into the heart of North America. Now it carried goods to American settlements in the west as well as fur trade goods.

In time Porter, Barton, and Company built a shipping empire that covered the eastern states. They built their own ships and warehouses and made agreements with other shipping companies. Soon their company controlled much of the Great Lakes trade. And the key to their vast empire was the Niagara Portage. Their earnings from shipping barrels of salt and molasses over the portage came to over \$36,000 in one year alone. This was a huge sum in those days, when hired hands earned ten dollars a month.

Porter, Barton, and Company brought tremendous growth to Lewiston. The village grew rapidly as settlers streamed in. In 1807

John Latta set up a tannery. And Dr. Alvord, and a blacksmith, and a druggist opened shop. The village, now a busy settlement, echoed to the sound of hammer and saw as new buildings sprang up. The raw smell of fresh cut lumber hung about the village. Two frame houses and five or six log houses, as well as shops, stood beside roads deep with ruts. But village pride was hurt at the sight of hogs and bears running loose. So, the town fathers ordered hogs yoked or fenced in, and bears shot. They paid a five dollar bounty on bear scalps.

More settlers poured in. Among them came another doctor, Willard Smith, to help heal the increasing population. In 1811, Lewiston became a port of entry for ships and goods coming into the United States from Canada. The collector of customs was the leading politician in the village. The War of 1812 destroyed the village. But after the war, ambitious and confident citizens returned and rebuilt their village. Lewiston continued booming.

The village soon had an "upper class." Hotchkiss' store advertised the finest selection of imported goods in Western New York. Lewiston fashions, up to date and fancy, caused many backwoods folks to stare in wonder. Stately homes graced shady, tree-lined streets. Well-groomed horses, hitched to fine carriages, pranced through the village. Glittering social affairs at Kelsey's Hotel kept village gossips talking for weeks. But in time Barton's Frontier House became the leading hotel.

The village had its other side too. It swarmed with people coming and going — traders, Indians, settlers, and riff-raff. Wagons, rattling west, lined the streets, waiting for the ferry to Canada and American settlements further west in Michigan. In dry weather dust clouds hung over the streets and in wet weather wagons churned the streets to mud. Below the hill by the river, boatmen and woodsmen and tramps, drunk and loud voiced, staggered from one tavern to another. And the poor, huddled in their dirty shacks by the river or on the edge of town, ate their salt pork and cornbread.

But Lewiston had much to be proud of—the first court, the first printing office, and the first newspaper, the *Niagara Democrat*. It also had a bakery, a stage office, and mills and docks by the river. It also boasted of Lewiston Academy, the finest school in Western New York. It had mail service twice a week, and later, more often.

All signs pointed to a great future for the busy settlement on the river. Confident merchants and public leaders talked loudly and often of Lewiston, "the future county seat of Niagara County."

And a state committee had reported the village as the best place for a canal linking Lake Ontario with Lake Erie.

The Erie Canal transformed it into a residential town But Lewiston's days as the largest and busiest village in Niagara County were coming to an end. The portage and river that made it thrive now chained it to the past.

Lewiston's future was bound to the Portage. As the canal, and later railroads and better roads appeared, the portage became less important and was abandoned. Gradually Lewiston became less busy. Much of the population moved on to Buffalo, then booming. Mills and docks rotted. Lewiston became a gentle town, quiet after its wild boom years. It went to sleep.

This did not happen at once. The drive of early years carried growth forward for a while. But blow after blow staggered the village. The planned canal joining Lake Erie and Lake Ontario was never started. In 1821, Lockport was chosen as the county seat of Niagara County. But the hardest blow was the completion of the Erie Canal, making the portage unnecessary. Reeling under this blow, Lewiston never recovered.



One of the major engineering feats of the Erie Canal, the Lockport locks.

After World War II, the village awakened again to the whine of saws and the rap of hammers. Lewiston became a booming residential area. The population increased from 1,626 in 1950 to 3,012 in 1957. In the 1950's the rumble of heavy machines, tearing at the cliffs, set villagers wondering about the future, as the Niagara Power Project took shape. But what the giant hydro-electric power plant will do for Lewiston is a question for the future to answer.

How did Suspension Bridge get its name?

Up Lewiston Hill and a few miles south of Lewiston on the Portage Road was a small settlement. Only a few pioneer farmers lived in the area before the 1840's. Then the Bellevue Land Company bought the land about the settlement, cut it into lots, and offered the lots for sale. The company had few buyers and failed. However, it did leave the name Bellevue tied to the settlement.

Bellevue really began to grow in the late 1840's. In 1848 a foot and carriage bridge was built across the gorge to Canada. The bridge brought people and people brought business. In 1854, the settlement had grown enough to officially become the village of Niagara City. After the first railroad bridge to Canada was completed in 1855, Niagara City soon became a railroad center. It continued to grow as the area expanded in manufacturing and transportation. And again its name was changed; this time Niagara City became Suspension Bridge, honoring the bridge that had brought growth and prosperity. Finally, in 1892, with a population of over 5,000, Suspension Bridge became part of the City of Niagara Falls.

How was Fort Schlosser influenced by the river?

Running southward from Suspension Bridge, the Portage Road tied Lewiston to the settlement of Fort Schlosser on the Upper Niagara River.

Since the days of the French, a fort had guarded the upper end of the portage. In 1745, a stockade surrounded French storehouses there. In 1751 Fort Little Niagara was built. It protected the upper portage first from Indians, and later from the English. During the French and Indian War in 1759, Captain Pouchot, commander of Fort Niagara, ordered the second Fort Little Niagara burned to keep it from English hands. After the French surrendered and paddled away from Niagara County, Captain Schlosser of the British Army raised Fort Schlosser near the ruins of the second Fort Little Niagara. John Stedman, who replaced Joncaire as Portage Master, lived in a house nearby.

In 1796, a tavern and a few cabins and Indian bark shacks stood in the clearing around Fort Schlosser. But the settlement never prospered. In 1806, Porter, Barton, and Company took it over as a landing for their shipping trade over the portage. It lingered on until the British burned it in 1813.

Three-quarters of a mile west of Fort Schlosser, closer to the falls, began the settlement of Manchester destined to become one of the most important power centers in the world. It started with Augustus Porter, who planned to use power from the Niagara River.

How did the Founding Fathers aid development of Niagara Falls?

Augustus Porter Augustus Porter, born into an important Connecticut family in 1769, lived during exciting and fateful days. By the time he was twenty, he had seen thirteen British colonies become a nation—the United States. The American Revolution was the background of his boyhood. One of his earliest memories was of men meeting at his home, and the ring of angry voices from the parlor, demanding liberty from the English. As a small boy he remembered rag-tag American colonials drilling in the village square for war with England. At six he stood in the dusty streets of Salisbury village, waving good-bye to soldiers marching to war. At ten he saw grief and tears on the faces of women receiving war news. At thirteen he watched ragged veterans straggling home from war. A few years later, he listened excitedly to the eager talk of soldiers going west to carve empires and fortunes from the forest. And he caught the fever of these restless times.

His restlessness and dreams did not pass as he grew older. His father was a physician, but Augustus had little interest in the quiet life of a small town doctor. So he turned to the outdoors. At seventeen he worked for a surveyor, picking up knowledge of the trade. But more and more the talk of vast lands waiting to be conquered filled his thoughts. At twenty the course of his life changed. At that time his father bought land in Western New York, near the Genesee River. In 1789 Augustus traveled west with a small party to survey the land. They plodded from Salisbury, Connecticut, to Albany, and then poled and portaged to Canandaigua and the Genesee Valley.

And so began many years of surveying and wandering in the western wilderness. In 1795 Augustus gazed upon Niagara Falls

and marked the spot as a future site for a city. In 1796 he surveyed land in Ohio. On that trip, supplies gave out and he had to live on rattlesnake meat. In that same year he married a girl from Hartford, Connecticut. In 1797-1798 he worked for Robert Morris and Joseph Ellicott, surveying the boundaries of the Holland Land Purchase.

Gradually he changed from small town youth into a frontiersman, quick and hard and sure of himself. His eyes and ears sharpened to the wilderness. He knew the rustle of wolves in the underbrush, the scream of panthers, the shuffle of bear, and the sounds of other forest animals. At night from his blankets beside the fire, he listened to the moaning wind in the tree-tops. At times he followed forest trails so narrow his saddle bags brushed thickets on both sides. Towering far above, trees shut out the sun, making the forest trail gloomy in the half-light.

But in all his wanderings, Porter never gave up his dreams of carving an empire from the wilderness. After his first wife died in 1799, he settled in Canandaigua, closer to the wilderness of the Niagara Frontier. In 1801 he married Jane Howell, but still he roamed the western forest, always surveying and buying land. In time he knew Western New York—its creeks, swamps, lakes, trails, and Indians—as few other white men did.

Porter, Barton and Company attracted settlers

In 1805, at the age of thirty-six, his years of wandering ended. Augustus gained a government contract to supply western posts and the exclusive right from New York State to use the Portage Road for thirteen years. With his brother Peter, Benjamin Barton, and Joseph Annin, he formed Porter, Barton, and Company. From the new settlement of Manchester by the Falls, Porter directed the company.

Under his leadership, the company built a shipping empire stretching from New York to Michigan, and from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi. Goods hauled from Montreal and Albany were unloaded at Lewiston and passed over the portage to Fort Schlosser. Loaded into boats there, the goods were poled up river to Black Rock and waiting lake vessels. Fleets of ships owned or hired by the company then carried the supplies into the heart of North America.

Porter spent most of the years 1805 and 1806 lining up men and equipment to operate this vast shipping empire. The work required was unbelievable. The company constructed warehouses, mills, houses, boats, ships, and docks. To keep goods moving, they hired boatmen, teamsters, clerks, carpenters, blacksmiths, farmers, and

sailors. Their need for wagons, horses, and oxen never ended. The company also had the problem of feeding men and animals. They bought land, cleared the forest, and planted crops to feed men and animals. At Manchester, the company built a sawmill, flour-mill, rope walk, and a boat yard, to supply their needs.

In 1806 Porter took his wife, son, and month-old baby from Canandaigua to Fort Schlosser. Fort Schlosser was not a sight to gladden the heart of a young wife and mother. Brush and grass grew in roads and footpaths, even coming up between the floor boards in some buildings. Rotting cabins stood empty, their doors ajar, windows staring blankly, and roofs sagging. Scurrying mice, rattlesnakes, and other creatures nested in and about buildings. The weather-beaten fort and barracks drooped nearby. The two families living there in miserable poverty did not make the place any more inviting. And the whole settlement, including the orchard, was surrounded by a towering oak forest. The only open spot was on the river bank, looking out onto the river.

The Porters moved into the old, rundown Stedman house, built in 1761. Jane Porter began the hard work of cleaning it. She eased her work somewhat by thinking of the fine brick house being built at Manchester. Helpful, too, was the thought that her husband was doing what he wanted, living and building in the wilderness he had visited so often in the past seventeen years. But wolves howling around the house at night, and bears killing sheep, made her uneasy.

Indians bothered her, too. Painted and feathered and wrapped in blankets, they visited her husband at all hours, day or night. Usually they came at night and entered without knocking. After eating and drinking, they slept on the kitchen floor before the fire. Next morning they vanished before the household stirred. Although her husband laughed at her fears, she never felt quite safe with Indians in the house. She also worried about the boys riding horses seven miles through the woods to school at Lewiston. Wolves and drunken Indians might harm them.

Porter founded Manchester

Part of Augustus Porter's dream was to raise a city to supply the shipping empire he had helped build. Soon after 1806, he made Fort Schlosser a shipping center. He built docks, houses for teamsters and boatmen, and barns for oxen and horses. He also added a blacksmith shop and sawmill.

But it was the settlement by the falls that he tried to build into an industrial city. After surveying it, he even named it Manchester after the famous industrial city in England. He offered

lots for fifty dollars an acre, hoping to bring settlers. Showing his own faith in its future, he moved his family to their new home in Manchester in 1809.

The settlement grew steadily. Mills, shops, a school house, and Fairchild's Eagle Tavern brought more settlers. But it was still a raw frontier settlement. The main street was a mud hole or a dust cloud, depending on the weather. Only small scattered clearings for houses and gardens broke the solid blanket of forest covering the village. Settlers dodged chickens, hogs, and sometimes cows, wandering in the streets. At night wise villagers shut up all livestock because of bears and wolves.

De Witt Clinton, future governor, rode through the village looking for a canal route in 1810. He wrote in his notebook that Manchester had a flour mill, sawmill, and tannery on the road beside the river. A post office in the Porter home, a tavern, a rope walk, and a few houses were half-hidden in the village woods. By 1813 a store joined the other buildings in the woods about the Falls.

**Whitney, DeVeaux
and Thomas worked
for Manchester's
future**

One day in 1812, a stocky man in his late twenties rode into Manchester. Parkhurst Whitney in time became a leading man in the little frontier community. Whitney did not work in the mills or on the farms of Porter, Barton, and Company. He rented a mill but soon saw future prosperity in the people viewing the wondrous Falls. He opened a tavern and prospered for a few months. Then came the War of 1812.

During the War, old Fort Schlosser was repaired and two hundred soldiers were stationed there. But they scattered before the attack of General Riall and his Indians. Riall and the Indians burned Manchester and Fort Schlosser as they had other settlements on the frontier. Only Fairchild's Eagle Tavern and two other buildings escaped the torch. At the time of the attack Augustus Porter was away on business. Jane Porter, piling valuables on a sled, slipped away with her children in the dead of night, headed for Canandaigua. They remained at Canandaigua until the war ended.

No new buildings went up until after the War of 1812. Parkhurst Whitney, who had fought well at Queenston Heights, returned to his ruined inn. He found it a complete loss. Fairchild, who lacked faith in the future of Manchester, sold his Eagle Tavern to Whitney. Whitney began improvements, looking forward to the future tourist trade. In 1819 he built a large addition to the tavern. In 1820 Whitney gave a public dinner to celebrate

the completion of the improvements in the Eagle Hotel. One hundred guests attended, and the dinner was the talk of the community for years. Later he bought the Cataract House to handle the overflow customers from the Eagle Hotel. In the following years most tourists seeking food and lodging stopped at Whitney's hotels.

Whitney was not the only one who saw the end of the portage carrying trade. The Porters also knew that the Erie Canal, then under construction, meant the end of the portage. So in 1815 Porter bought Goat Island for industrial development and tourist trade. The bridge the Porters built to the island carried goods and sightseers for many years.

In 1817 Samuel DeVeaux moved to Manchester. At the age of nineteen he had been appointed supplier at Fort Niagara. DeVeaux settled on a farm near the Whirlpool and opened a store close by the Falls. In a short time he had a name for fair and honest trading. In later years he was postmaster, judge, and law-maker. His interest in the Falls led him to write a guide book for tourists. After his death, he left his fortune to establish a school for orphaned boys. DeVeaux School is still operating.

Not long after DeVeaux moved to Manchester, another man of importance to the community arrived. The day Dr. Ambrose Thomas came in 1821, wives and mothers breathed a sigh of relief. Fear of sickness always nagged them. Thoughts of cholera or typhoid brought a hot flash of panic. Dr. Thomas's neat white house was a comfort to the village. At any hour, day or night, winter or summer, he was ready with his horse and buggy to visit the sick in the village and surrounding woodlands.

Four years after Dr. Thomas arrived, the Erie Canal was completed. Although the Erie Canal slowed down the growth of Manchester, the village had other resources. As well as being beautiful, fast falling water is a source of power. And it was water power that fulfilled Augustus Porter's dream of an industrial city at the brink of the Falls. By 1825 villagers knew their future depended upon tourists and water power. But this is the story of another chapter.

What happened to La Salle as a result of its growth?

Eastward from Manchester, past Fort Schlosser, the Niagara River branches at Cayuga Island. The Little Niagara River, flowing between the island and the main bank, is joined by Cayuga Creek. Where creek and Little Niagara meet was a settlement called Cayuga Creek. Cayuga Creek settlement was also the place

where the Military Road, running between Buffalo and Lewiston, met the Fort Schlosser Road which ran between Cayuga Creek and Manchester.

Near the junction of creeks and roads, Big Smith raised a log cabin in 1806. In time, stage coaches stopped there, giving passengers a chance to stretch before jolting on to Lewiston or Buffalo. In spite of roads and waterways, Cayuga Creek grew slowly. By 1850, there were only two houses, a sawmill, a blacksmith shop, and a tavern at the junction of Military and Fort Schlosser Roads.

But one summer day in 1867 the little settlement was crowded with people. Flags and banners draped houses and tavern. Village officials, carrying stove-pipe hats, their long black coats flapping in the wind, stood on a platform decorated with flags. On horse back, in wagons, or standing in the dusty road, villagers listened to speeches. Village leaders spoke of the great French explorer La Salle and of his brave little ship, the *Griffon*, built nearby on Little Niagara River. And finally they noted how fitting it was for Cayuga Creek to be renamed La Salle. After the shouting and cheering stopped ringing in the nearby forests, the men filed into the tavern to argue the future of La Salle. And the women and children gathered in nearby homes, brightening their dull lives with gossip.

In September, 1897, La Salle village again celebrated an important event. This time the village was incorporated and legally became a village. But in spite of all hopes for La Salle, its growth was painfully slow. By 1902 it had a population of only seven hundred.

Then came World War I. Under the pressure for more goods to fight the war, La Salle expanded rapidly. Size also brought headaches. The village had to provide water, police, and fire protection, and many other services. Increased services meant higher taxes. Faced with increasing taxes, La Salle listened carefully to offers by Niagara Falls officials to make the village a part of Niagara Falls. This would make public services cheaper. After heated arguments, La Salle finally became part of the City of Niagara Falls in 1927.

How did the founding of Bergholtz differ from that of other settlements near the Niagara River?

Northeast of La Salle, Bergholtz Creek flows into Cayuga Creek. In the 1840's, Prussian Lutherans left Germany to escape religious persecution and settled by Bergholtz Creek. Ministers,

schoolmasters, and skilled workers came with the group from Germany. They set up a religious community which is still prospering after a hundred years.

Busily going about daily living, early towns along lake, river, and creek were soon to undergo changes. Another strip of water, the Grand Erie Canal, brought changes few people even dreamed about. Hardly a settlement in Niagara County escaped the influence of the canal. Some stopped growing, while many new ones sprang up along the canal, as we shall see in the next chapter.

8. Settlements spring up along canal and escarpment

The Erie Canal brings life or death to towns

About five miles southeast from Cayuga Creek, Tonawanda Creek joins the Niagara River. Winding and twisting westward from Batavia, the creek forms the southern boundary of Niagara County. At the time of settlement, the creek drained the Great Tonawanda Swamp that began a few miles east of the Niagara River.

Beginning near the mouth of Tonawanda Creek, the Grand Erie Canal (now part of the New York State Barge Canal System) stretched over three hundred miles to Albany, New York. After its completion in 1825, many early settlements died. And overnight wilderness farms became new sites of thriving villages and towns.

How did North Tonawanda grow into a city?

George Burger was an early settler

The settlement of North Tonawanda took root in the unbroken forest where the Niagara River and Tonawanda Creek join.

In 1809 a wagon lurched through the woods north of the creek. George Burger, dressed in homespun grey and a black felt hat, guided his oxen with a long stick. He walked beside them, trying to avoid deep holes in the crude road. The broad rimmed wheels sank deeply into the soft mud. Sometimes the wagons jolted to a stop. Man and oxen struggled to get it moving again. Pools of black water formed in the ruts, reminders of the swamp close by. All the while, clouds of mosquitoes and flies hung about man and oxen, biting until blood flowed.

The forest gloom was thickening to night before Burger reached a clearing he had cut from the forest. Approaching the clearing, he saw among the trees the dark shape of the lean-to he had built earlier. By the lean-to he yelled the oxen to a halt. Unyoking the animals, he staked them out to graze, planning to unload the wagon next day.

After building a campfire and eating, Burger sat staring into the fire. Visions of the farm he would build in the wilderness filled his mind. The campfire burned low and the night dampness chilled him and brought his dreaming to an end. Carrying wood from a nearby pile, he threw it on the fire and crawled into his blankets. Sometime during the night, the snort and stamp of the oxen awoke him. He piled more wood on the fire to keep wolves away and rolled into his blankets again. Next day he was up before the fog had cleared the forest, eager to start raising his home—the first in the future North Tonawanda.

Other settlers came Burger had little company in the forest the first year. The only humans he saw were a few horsemen and passengers in the stages that rumbled along Military Road between Lewiston and Buffalo. Then other pioneers came. One of them, Garrett Van Slyke, thought an inn would make money, and in 1810 he built a log tavern close to the Lewiston-Buffalo Road. Soon stages began

to stop at Van Slyke's. Passengers, sore and stiff from bouncing around in the stage, climbed down to rest and eat at the inn. Not far from Van Slyke's tavern a small creek cut through the forest to the Niagara River. Here a third pioneer, Joshua Pettit, built a cabin and tavern near the creek that later bore his name. From his farm by the creek, Pettit was one of the first settlers to boat his goods to markets and mills at Manchester (Niagara Falls) down river.

Early settlers traded at Manchester

Manchester was near the Upper Landing of the portage and so was a gateway to eastern markets. It is also a trading center for the surrounding area. Mills there turned out the flour and lumber that pioneers needed so much. Most early pioneers followed Pettit and traded in Manchester. They pushed their boats, loaded with farm produce, from wooded creeks and inlets and drifted down river to Manchester. On the return trip, men dragged the heavy, flat-bottomed boats up river with ropes. A man on the boat, using a pole, kept it clear of shore and snags. In time the path on shore, worn by the feet of many straining men, was known as the towpath.

Settlers traded at Manchester until the Erie Canal was completed in 1825. Of course, no trading took place during the War of 1812, when Manchester was burned. Not only Manchester, but North Tonawanda also, went up in flames in the war.



Stopping to change teams. The stagecoach and tavern were a common sight in the Niagara Frontier region.

The War of 1812 destroyed North Tonawanda When the war broke out in 1812, one small block house on the south shore of Tonawanda Creek guarded the settlement. It was manned by sixteen United States regulars. It might have been destroyed in 1812 rather than in 1813, but for the quick thinking of the lieutenant in command of the block house.

One clear day in 1812, a guard's yell brought the lieutenant to the top deck of the block house. Snatching the field glass, he peered in the direction the guard pointed. Across the Niagara River on Grand Island, he saw several hundred redcoats and Indians lining the banks. He also noticed that some British soldiers pointed toward the blockhouse. He watched the enemy on Grand Island a few moments longer. Then he gave a few sharp commands and a small troop in blue and buff uniforms marched smartly from the blockhouse. The ruffle of drums and the shrill clear notes of the fife carried the tune "Yankee Doodle" to the surrounding forest.

After the British had seen them, the men marched back into the blockhouse. Inside, they turned their uniforms inside out and left the block house again. Perhaps the British thought a large force was on guard for they did not attack.

But in December, 1813, British and Indians captured and burned the block house and the nearby settlement. Settlers around the creek mouth fled eastward before the onrushing British and Indians. They buried what belongings they could not carry, hoping to get them later. After the danger had passed, they straggled back to their ruined homes.

More pioneers settled in North Tonawanda After the War of 1812, more settlers drifted into the settlement that later became North Tonawanda. In 1818, Steven Jacobs rode into the settlement, then a cluster of a dozen or so cabins, surrounded by woods and swamps. Jacobs was born in Massachusetts. At the age of seventeen, he had fired on charging lines of British redcoats at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Like many others after the Revolution, he wandered westward to seek his fortune.

The next year, James Carney settled on Tonawanda Island at the mouth of the creek. Carney worked for Porter, Barton, and Company as a teamster and boatman. He passed the island many times as he poled goods between Fort Schlosser and Black Rock. Attracted by the beauty of forest-covered Tonawanda Island, he lived there many years.

Irish workers came to dig the canal Besides settlers, others tramped through the mud of the frontier settlement following the War of 1812. Sturdy immigrant workers, speaking English with a pleasant accent, came to dig the Erie Canal. Plastered with mud from the digging of the canal, some roamed the settlement's unpaved streets. Others drove wagons loaded with dirt, stone, lumber, and supplies down the deeply rutted streets. And they lived in flimsy shanties by the creek, and brawling, drinking, and gambling, they livened up the settlement in the early 1820's.

Niagara Village took root In 1823, a dam across Tonawanda Creek raised the water four feet. Tonawanda Creek now became a part of the Erie Canal. The next year a bridge replaced the old rope-drawn ferry across the creek.

When the canal was completed in 1825, hopeful villagers looked forward to a booming future. They felt their village had much to draw settlers. For one thing, the Erie Canal was a route to eastern markets. For another, a daily stagecoach tied the settlement to Buffalo and Lewiston. And finally, the recently-built Niagara Hotel offered rooms to travelers and businessmen.

Three businessmen, James and John Sweeney and George Goundry, also thought the future looked bright for the settlement at the creek mouth. So in 1824 they formed a company, bought land, and laid out Niagara Village (North Tonawanda). Their lots, however, did not sell and the company failed. The canal buildings, barges, wagons, and the swarms of workmen, had given a false idea about the growth of Niagara Village. After they finished the canal, many of the workers and their families moved on, and wagons, shanties, and buildings disappeared. For a time the village was almost deserted, and from 1825 to 1830 the growth of Niagara Village all but stopped.

A few settlers, however, continued to trickle into the village. In 1825, William Vandervoort bought 1700 acres from the Holland Land Company. And in 1828, James Sweeney, who had helped lay out Niagara Village in 1824, moved from Buffalo to the village. He gave a "gospel lot" for a Methodist Church and a "larn'n" ("learning") lot for a school house in the village.

During this period, Stephen White arrived from Salem, Massachusetts. White, so the story goes, had fled west to escape vicious gossip following his trial for murder. He was also a representative for a Boston lumber company that cut oak on Grand Island. On

Tonawanda Island he built a mansion, Beechwater, where famous Americans visited him. During his ten year-stay, his daughter married Fletcher Webster, son of the great orator, Senator Daniel Webster. Daniel Webster visited often at Beechwater. In awe of the mighty Daniel, villagers named Webster Street in his honor.

Although the village was small, an industry was stirring that would make North Tonawanda world-famous. The lumbering industry that made it a success started in the 1840's. White oak on Grand Island was excellent for ship-building, and villagers made good use of it. The graceful clipper ships built in New England used some of this oak. But the story of the lumbering industry belongs to another chapter.

Industries helped As industry grew, so did the village. In
Niagara Village 1857 Niagara Village which for some time
become a city had been called North Tonawanda, separated from the Town of Tonawanda and became part of the Town of Wheatfield. And in 1865 it was incorporated under the name of North Tonawanda. Finally in 1897 it became the City of North Tonawanda.

From North Tonawanda, the Tonawanda Creek that formed part of the Erie Canal, snaked north and east nine miles to Pendleton. At Pendleton canal and creek separated. Tonawanda Creek flowed east through Batavia, and the Erie Canal went north to Lockport.

What events helped Lockport change from a wilderness to a village?

Before 1820 the present site of Lockport was a dense forest. Rarely did sunlight sift through the roof of branches and strike the forest floor. Bear, deer, and wolves prowled in the underbrush and roamed over narrow trails criss-crossing the shadowy forest.

A cabin was built at Where the road between Batavia and Fort
Cold Spring and Niagara cut through the Lockport area,
settlers arrived there was the famous Cold Spring. Tracks of men and animals marked the mud edging the bubbling water. The charred wood of campfires dotted the area about the spring. In 1802, Adam Strouse built a shelter for Philip Beach, the mail carrier between Batavia and Fort Niagara, at Cold Spring. This was the first cabin in the Lockport area. In 1805, another pioneer, Charles Wilbur, built a tavern in the area. It soon became a stopping place for travelers.

Over the Batavia-Fort Niagara Road tramped Nathan Comstock about 1816. Comstock halted his oxen at the north end of

present Lockport. Soon the ring of his ax and the crash of falling trees echoed in the forest as he raised a cabin in the wilderness. A few years later, in 1820, Esek Brown, a distant neighbor of Comstock, opened his unfinished tavern.

A new village chose Brown's tavern and the whole frontier
its name were soon to undergo great changes as the Erie Canal turned the area into a roaring boom town.

Soon after David Thomas, state surveyor, laid out the exact site of the canal locks, buildings began to go up. A village soon sprang up where canal locks lowered boats down the escarpment. Brown's remodeled and expanded tavern became the Lockport Hotel. Pioneers in the area surveyed their land and offered lots for sale to incoming settlers. Another surveyor, Jesse P. Haines, called a meeting at the Lockport Hotel to choose a name for the new village. Haines wanted the name Lockborough. But most villagers present voted for Lockport, a name suggested by Dr. Isaac Smith, one of the Quaker leaders. The Quakers began settlement in 1816 and in 1819 established a church and school.

The boom begins Now the village had a name, streets, lots, and was ready for settlers. The trickle of settlers into the village increased rapidly. Immigrant canal workers and their families came into Lockport. Contractors pitched tents or built shanties along the canal. Irish workers moved into company dwellings or built their own log cabins to form "Irish town," a little community of canal workers. In the evenings, young men spent their time laughing, drinking, and brawling. Close on the heels of the canal workers came lawyers, merchants, carpenters, masons, gamblers, tavern keepers, thieves, and riff-raff. They came in covered wagons, carriages, and stage coaches. Others trotted in on horse back or straggled in on foot. They crowded muddy streets dressed in city finery, work woolens, homespun, or buckskins. By the end of 1821, population had grown from a few dozen to over two thousand.

Some of the earliest settlers to come were merchants. On a summer day in 1821, Morris Tucker drove into Lockport in a wagon piled high with goods. His big wagon creaked down the main street to Brown's Lockport Hotel. He stored his merchandise there and began building a general store. Three weeks later, Tucker opened his store, and boasted of having the second largest building in Lockport.

Tucker soon had competition. House and Boughton, and Lebeus Fish opened stores and became leading merchants in Lock-

port. Later George Roger's blacksmith shop, John Jackson's bakery, and Elliott Lewis' harness shop opened for business. Soon other shops with nodding and smiling owners dotted the village.

Settlement continued. Axmen hacked streets from the forest and more buildings went up. Carpenters were busy everywhere. The human flood needed hotels, restaurants, stores, houses, and stables. The village changed constantly. Day by day new streets and buildings appeared. And an endless dull roar filled the village. Axes, hammers, saws, picks, and shovels rapped, whined, or clattered everywhere. Yelling and cursing teamsters drove wagons around tree stumps in the muddy streets. And above the din was the quake and roar of black powder blasting rock for the canal locks. Each blast brought a shower of rocks thumping onto the tops of nearby buildings.

. Goods and wagons choked Lockport's muddy streets. Freight wagons dumped tons of goods around the village. Before stores, mountains of packing boxes waited to be put on shelves and counters. Fresh-cut lumber stood stacked by half-finished buildings. Haystacks stood by stables and barns. Logs and rocks from construction areas lay everywhere, even blocking some streets. And through the mud and confusion jolted canal wagons, hauling supplies.



Blasting with DuPont's black powder for the Lockport locks.

Lockport Hotel became business center Brown's Lockport Hotel became the village business center. Lawyers, merchants, land buyers, and contractors boarded there, crowding the smoke-filled bar room. Tracking the floor with muddy boots, they shouldered through the crowds, seeking friends and business acquaintances. With cigars and whiskey nearby, some sat at tables examining deeds and contracts. Business often was transacted in the streets. Land buyers, coats flapping, hurried about waving deeds at possible customers. Sometimes lots changed hands several times. Business boomed.

The rapidly expanding village also had its problems. It lacked sewers and garbage collection. Trash heaps beside buildings made nests for rats and a breeding ground for typhoid and cholera germs. As the summer wore on, the smell in some parts of town was almost unbearable. Not until the boom passed was the village kept clean.

By the end of 1821, anyone who had been in the Lockport area in 1820 would not have recognized it. The deer, bear, and wolves were gone. Homes, shops, and other buildings replaced most of the forest. Canal workers had torn a great gash in the earth, heaping mountains of rock and dirt along its edge. But Lockport was more than a boom town—quick to live and quick to die. Beneath the rush and hustle, the village was building a firm foundation. Most merchants and shop owners remained after the boom days ended. Some canal workers and their families moved on, others stayed. In time blacksmiths, harness makers, and others built small industries.

Lockport became the county seat in 1821 The village also showed other signs of lasting. Lockport was chosen over Lewiston as the county seat of the newly reorganized Niagara County in 1821. The new county included the land north of Tonawanda Creek and west of Orleans County. In that same year mail and stage coach service arrived. Orsamus Turner bought the *Lockport Observatory*, the village newspaper. Pamela Aldrich also opened a school in the Quaker meeting house in 1821.

The section of the canal between Lockport and Albany was completed in 1823. But the section of the canal between Lockport and Pendleton still waited to be completed. When barges arrived at Lockport, goods had to be portaged overland to Pendleton and then by canalized Tonawanda Creek to Buffalo. The profitable carrying trade between Lockport and Pendleton did not last long. In 1825 the canal locks were completed.

Lafayette visited Niagara County

A short time before the completion of the locks in June 1825, Lafayette, hero of the Revolution, rode into Lockport. The village lacked cannon to greet him, but blasting powder for the canal was set to go off as he passed. When he stepped from the stagecoach before the Washington House, the only carpet in the village was spread for him to walk upon. And when his canal boat left, the whole village turned out to give him a noisy farewell.

A few months after Lafayette boarded a packet boat and headed east, the canal was completed. Lockport's bustling and brawling days passed. The village quieted to a slow, steady growth. Although the population had been greater during the boom years, in 1829 Lockport Village had twenty-one hundred people. In that year it was incorporated as the second official village in Niagara County.

How did Gasport develop?

The Erie Canal, with piles of earth and rock on its banks, stretched eastward from Lockport to Gasport. As with many villages, Gasport was a result of the canal. Located between canal and Niagara escarpment, it began on land owned by the Holland Land Company.

The area about Gasport had settlers shortly after 1800. In 1803, under the leadership of such men as Gad Warner, a settlement took root a little north of the present Gasport. In the beginning, settlers had little time for anything but work in their struggle to stay alive. But one day in October 1805, they forgot about work and hardship. Work-roughened hands laid down axes and hoes and brooms. Work stopped. In cabin after cabin, in the settlement and the surrounding forest, families dug into battered trunks and dragged out clothing they had not worn since they had settled in the wilderness.

Mothers and older sisters scrubbed and polished the children with strong home-made soap. They straightened wrinkled, ill-fitting clothing and forced shoes on feet that had been free since early spring. The children in their turn, watched their fathers shave and mothers and sisters carefully comb their hair and wear their best dresses. But no gaiety filled these preparations. The event was too important for that, and even the children sensed it.

Word had spread swiftly that a traveling missionary had ridden into the settlement and would hold service that evening. Most settlers felt a deep ache for religion. In the loneliness of the first years, they missed religious services more than anything.

But the settlement was too small to support a church. Since it started two years before, they had not had a religious meeting of any sort, even without a minister.

Toward evening that October day, families within the settlement began drifting over dirt roads and by rough log cabins to the meeting place. Other families rattled out of the woods in wagons or filed out on foot, most seeing each other dressed-up for the first time. They greeted one another perhaps a little uncomfortable in their ill-fitting clothing. And so they gathered in the slight chill of the fall evening.

When the sermon began, families clustered together, their faces lifted respectfully toward the preacher in the flickering candlelight of the school house. Perhaps their thoughts slipped back to homes and friends they had left when they settled on the frontier. Near the end of the sermon, they hung their heads and mumbled prayers with the preacher. After the sermon, they filed by the minister and gave him their deeply felt thanks.

The respect and attentiveness of these settlers did not escape the minister. He saw that his words had lessened the cares and worries of their hard life in the wilderness. Later that night by a flickering light he scratched his thoughts about these people in his journal. The next day he said good-bye to Gad Warner and others, heeled his horse into movement and continued on his way west. Perhaps as his horse's hooves dug into the dirt road and he dodged low hanging branches, he thought more of these pioneers who had been so moved by his presence.

Enoch Hitchcock owned part of the site of Gasport

However, Gasport did not begin at this settlement, but a short distance south. In 1818 Enoch Hitchcock completed the purchase of land from the Holland Land Company, now most of the present site of Gasport. With axe in hand and gun close by, he built a home from the forest as others had done. When new settlers struggled into the area, Hitchcock was glad to welcome them. Neighbors meant an easier time for all. They helped in clearing forests and raising cabins. And their presence in time of suffering was a great comfort.

Gasport grew slowly Others came in, and a crude, raw settlement slowly took shape in the wilderness. Colonel Jonathan Mabee, who was a miller and land buyer, bought a flour mill on the wooded banks of Eighteen Mile Creek. Settlers for miles around carried grain to be ground to flour at Mabee's. Those lacking oxen or horses staggered through the forest lugging

hundred pound sacks of wheat or flour. And pioneers using oxen and sleds hauled lumber from Amos and Andrew Brown's rough sawmill to clearings in the forest.

Within a few years, Sextus Shearer's general store was the village social center. On Saturdays, muddy-booted settlers, loafing around a cracker barrel, argued about the politics of President Andy Jackson and about the Erie Canal. Villagers felt pride and relief at the sight of Dr. Timothy Page hurrying about the village.

As soon as the settlement was large enough, schools and churches offered learning and religion to pioneers. In 1850, Gasport Academy opened its doors and was a success for a time. But it was replaced by expanding public education. Most of the early religions still remain.

Lack of resources limited growth Later improvements in the Erie Canal destroyed the gas springs that gave Gasport its name. Gasport, lacking any large natural resources, has remained a small village along the canal.

What is Middleport's story?

The Erie Canal made Middleport as it did Gasport and other settlements in Niagara County. Middleport, the last village along the Erie Canal in Niagara County, followed the pattern of other canal villages.

Freeman's Corners took shape Asher Freeman tracked into the forest and swamps in 1811 and settled south of what is now Middleport. As other early settlers did, Asher built a log cabin, cleared land, and planted wheat and other crops and he fought wolves and suffered hunger, loneliness, and sickness. Before long, however, Asher greeted new settlers and attended cabin raising bees and watched with satisfaction as the smoke of new homefires trailed skyward from the forest. New settlers needed flour and lumber, and soon mill wheels creaked in nearby streams. And so the settlement of Freeman's Corners took shape in the forest.

Irish canal workers, digging and blasting their way across New York State, started Middleport, just north of Freeman's Corners. Taverns often sprang up where canal workers swung picks and pushed shovels. Frontier tavern keepers eagerly raked in the twelve dollars a month the workers earned. Shops and stores followed taverns, thus stirring villages to life. Middleport began in this way.

Levi Cole and his wife erected a tavern on the site of Middleport. In 1820 they cheerfully swung the door wide open for canal

workers. Canal diggers welcomed Cole's tavern as a place to loaf after a day digging the Erie. But not long after Cole opened up he and the canal workers wished the tavern had never been built.

One day a mud-caked gang of brawny workers in sweat-stained shirts tramped into the tavern. They crowded up to the bar and yelled and pounded for whiskey. As the night wore on, the tavern shook with the roar and laughter of half-drunken men. They began to argue. A fight started and Cole, trying to keep order, knocked a canal digger to the floor. Raging at Cole, the other diggers bunched to attack. Cole held a club ready in his fist and backed outside. As the gang caught up with him, he swung the club, and a worker sank to the ground, his head broken. Cole was later convicted of manslaughter and was sent to prison.

Meanwhile, more white-topped wagons rumbled into the area. Axes continued to ring, more trees fell, and buildings went up, one after another. Soon Middleport had a blacksmith shop, James Northam's general store, and G. and E. Mather's tannery, shoe shop, and harness shop. The Mathers sold leather products to the villagers. And at nearby Johnson Creek and Jeddo, pioneers built flour and sawmills.

The village was divided over incorporation

A campaign to incorporate Middleport took place in 1859. The question divided the village into two camps. A majority of poor settlers attacked the move toward incorporation because it meant increased taxes. They bombarded the rich with charges of dishonesty and evil doings. The wealthy landowners counter-attacked with charges of selfishness and blindness. Fighting ended in a victory for the forces of incorporation. But bitterness among the defeated poor lingered for years.

Middleport has changed little in size since 1859. Lacking any large waterpower or other resource, the village has remained a farming community. Gradually, however, some industry has appeared. Today a leading industry is the Niagara Chemical Division of the Food Machinery and Chemical Corporation.

The escarpment attracts many settlers

Endless centuries ago, the Niagara escarpment south of Middleport lay beneath a warm sea. Where trees now grow, great fish glided in murky water hunting other fish. Many kinds of sea life lived about the coral reef now forming part of the escarpment and plants on the ocean floor sheltered many more. Millions of years later the ocean disappeared and strange creatures roamed

the land. Then the ice age glacier arrived, killing all life. Finally, with time and sunlight, the great glacier melted and moved northward. By the time Indians wandered into Niagara County, the escarpment was a high rocky, wooded ridge that stretched across the land.

Running east and west, the escarpment divides Niagara County into upper and lower parts. Below the ridge the Ontario Lake Plain reaches northward to Lake Ontario. The escarpment is the edge of a plateau that spreads southward to the Allegheny Mountains. The advantage of fewer mosquitoes and black flies drew many settlers to the escarpment.

What is the story of Pekin's growth?

Nine miles west of Lockport, Pekin perches on the escarpment overlooking the wide lake plain and the distant blue haze of Lake Ontario.

John Carney came into Niagara County in 1809, planning to settle along the Ridge Road. Carney was not satisfied with land along the Ridge Road itself, and he searched elsewhere for land. He pushed and hacked his way up the escarpment until he reached the present site of Pekin. When he gazed over the sweeping plain and distant lake below, he decided to settle on the escarpment. So he began raising a log cabin, sure that his family back east would be pleased with the site.

For the next few weeks, the axe was like part of his arm, felling trees and notching logs. Slowly the cabin took shape in the wilderness. Sweating and straining, he raised the walls with the help of neighbors and then he clung to the pole framework of the roof as he shingled it with bark. Evenings, before turning in, Carney sat leaning against a tree gazing out over the sprawling forest and lake. Finally the cabin was up and he hurried east for his family.

In time other settlers, mostly New Englanders, trickled into Pekin, then called Mountain Ridge. William Crosier, Dr. Myron Orton, and others bought land from the Holland Land Company and settled about Mountain Ridge. By 1822 the village had a few dozen settlers, a school, a flour mill owned by Elias Rose, and a postmaster, John Jones.

In 1837, six years after the village changed its name from Mountain Ridge to Pekin, the Lockport-Niagara Falls Railroad passed through Pekin. A few shops and stores came with the railroad. Saturdays the settlement was alive with settlers flocking in to trade. Pekin must have been a lively place in those days, for taverns outnumbered all other businesses.

How did the railroad affect Sanborn's history?

Fourteen years later, in 1851, the railroad that had made Pekin grow was abandoned. Pekin's boom years ended. Many settlers went elsewhere to trade. But a new line, the Rochester, Lockport and Niagara Falls Railroad was built in 1851. This new railroad built another village two miles south. At first the settlement around the railroad station was called South Pekin Station but later it was renamed Sanborn.

About 1809 Jarius Rose settled in the woods and swamps that later became Sanborn. Two years later Jarius planted apple seeds on land he had bought from the Holland Land Company. The young apple trees he sold were among the first orchards in Niagara County.

One of the most important early men in the history of Sanborn appeared in 1846. The Reverend E. C. Sanborn soon had the respect of villagers and became the leading figure in the frontier settlement. He was called upon to settle problems and disputes among settlers and he was always ready to bring sympathy and comfort to those in trouble.

In the early years, Pekin was the trading center of the settlement that later became Sanborn. But, as we have already mentioned, this changed in 1851 when the Rochester, Lockport and Niagara Falls Railroad built its new station. The railroad, running two miles south, started a new settlement, South Pekin Station (Sanborn). Soon the village had stores, a post office, and a Methodist Church.

In 1864 South Pekin Station was renamed Sanborn. Sanborn's first industries were mills. Lee R. Sanborn, son of the Reverend Sanborn, operated one of the earliest flour and sawmills in the village. Later, B. and J. Hudson took over Sanborn's old flour-mill. They remodeled it and built one of the finest flour-mills in Western New York. Many bakeries, hotels, and stores bought the quality flour ground by the Hudson Brothers. After a half century, they sold their mill to the Sanborn Milling Company.

What events shaped Ransomville's development?

About seven miles northwest of Sanborn, below the escarpment, is the settlement of Ransomville. In the 1800's the early settlers found that beavers had dammed a branch of Twelve Mile Creek north of Pekin and turned the area into a marshland. For many years malaria-carrying mosquitoes and blood-sucking flies kept settlers away. For this reason Ransomville was one of the last parts of Niagara County to be settled. Many settlers who passed through the area thought it never would be settled.

But about 1817 Gideon Curtiss plodded through the marsh and settled in the area. Clouds of mosquitoes, and black flies hung over Curtiss and his oxen as they hauled logs to the cabin site. He soon learned to smear his skin with bear grease as Indians did and to keep smoke-fires burning by the cabin. By trapping out the beaver and wrecking the dams, he drained the swamp and so reduced the mosquito population. But smoke-fires were a common sight by frontier cabins for years.

A year or so later, Gideon's younger brother, Gilbert, settled nearby. Young Gil Curtiss had romance in his heart as he strode into Niagara County. During the whole journey from Connecticut, he had been filled with dreams of his future bride and the new home he would carve from the wilderness. For weeks before he left, they had planned every inch of the cabin he would raise near his brother's.

Like many young couples, they had money problems. The payment on land to the Holland Land Company cut into their savings. So Gil brought only enough food to last until the cabin was up. His brother Gideon helped him raise the walls, but finishing the cabin took longer than Gil expected. Food ran low and he lacked money to buy more. His brother had barely enough to feed his own family. After the cabin was up, he hurried home to Connecticut on foot. Following the marriage and many joyful, yet tearful, goodbyes, the young couple bumped westward in a covered wagon. Upon leaving the Ridge Road in Niagara County, they had to hack a path for oxen and wagons to their cabin.

During the first year they cleared more land. For weeks smoke and flames from burning trees billowed from the clearing. They collected wood ashes for "black salts" and planted wheat and corn. Unable to ship their crop to markets because of poor transportation, Gil turned it into whiskey and in 1825 he opened a tavern.

Slowly other settlers pushed in and a settlement grew up. In 1822 the Baker family arrived from Canandaigua. Their wagon was useless once they left Ridge Road. So they used ox sleds to drag furnishings through bogs. The Bakers raised a typical log cabin, lacking a door, a floor, and glass windows.

Another important settler came in 1820. Charley Quade had an easy way about him that people liked. Wherever he went, settlers had a pleasant word for him. In 1830 he built a hotel and prospered. Later he gave it up and opened a general store where two roads crossed. Quade's store was a thriving trading center for the surrounding countryside. He was willing to take goods in place of cash—a scarce item among early settlers. Gradually

pioneers called the little settlement "Quade's Corners."

The most respected settler strolled into the settlement on foot in 1826. Jehial C. S. Ransom, carrying all he owned on his back, began working in the village as a carpenter. He earned a name as a hard, honest worker. Not long after this he became postmaster. And then he had the honor of having the village of Quade's Corners officially named Ransomville.

Ransomville followed the pattern of other settlements in its growth. It soon had a school, Baptist Church, and a sawmill owned by a pioneer named Fowler. The coming of the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg Railroad in 1876 brought a flurry of growth. But Ransomville did not boom the way Pekin and Sanborn did when a railroad came. By 1876, Niagara County was pretty well settled.

Ransomville has grown slowly through the years. Its chief resource is farm land and so it took little part in the industrial growth of Niagara County. But following World War II, like most small towns near large cities, Ransomville had an increase in residential building.

The escarpment winds westward from Pekin, and finally reaches Lewiston and the Niagara River.

By 1825 most present villages and cities in Niagara County had taken root. The early ones started along the lake, rivers, and creeks where settlers had transportation to markets. Later the Erie Canal gave birth to several more villages. Finally the railroads, skirting the Niagara Escarpment, brought a few more.

All these settlements followed a like pattern of growth. First the early settlers hacked homes from the forest. Then sawmills, flour mills, and a general store followed to supply increasing numbers of settlers. Schools and churches appeared with increasing population. Then the shops appeared near the general stores and mills. But in 1825 the Erie Canal came and changed the whole economic life of Niagara County. Thriving early towns like Lewiston became less important and others like Lockport and North Tonawanda sprang up almost overnight in the woods. But if the settlements had some natural resource like Niagara Falls, with power from the Niagara River, they came back strong when the nation industrialized, as we shall see in later chapters.

Your History Workshop

Words and terms you should know

squatters	distillery	militia
reservation	epidemic	teamster
survey	husking bee	quartermaster
lean-to	blockade	contractor
barter	flog	incorporation

Where is it on the map?

Susquehanna River	Queenston	Fort George
Genesee River	Newark	Batavia
Oswego River	Big Tree	Seneca Lake

Who's Who in history?

Robert Morris	Isaac Brock	Augustus Porter
Joseph Ellicott	General McClure	Red Jacket
Peter B. Porter	Winfield Scott	William Hull
Stephen Van Rensselaer	Gillet Family	Henry Dearborn

How carefully did you read?

1. Describe the Niagara region in the 1790's.
2. What was the Holland Purchase? What was the "Mile Strip?"
3. From whom did Robert Morris purchase Western New York?
4. What were Red Jacket's objections to the sale of Western New York lands?
5. What were the terms of the Treaty of Big Tree?
6. List the routes pioneers followed to Niagara County.
7. Describe the pioneer's cabin, his diet, and his sources of money.
8. What changes took place in frontier life after 1805?
9. Explain the development of a frontier settlement into a village.
10. What were the causes of the War of 1812?
11. Who were "War Hawks?"
12. Explain the American war plans.
13. Describe the armed forces of Niagara.
14. What was the result of Dearborn's victory over Fort George?
15. What were the provisions of the Treaty of Ghent?
16. In what year was the Erie Canal completed?

Activities to help you understand Part III

1. Make an outline of Augustus Porter's life. Deliver orally your biographical sketch to the class.
2. Make a detailed study of one of the Niagara County towns or cities. Include in your study the founding and development of the settlement, the chief occupations, etc.. Report to the class

3. On an outline map of New York State trace and label the Erie Canal. Include the names of all water bodies which help make up the canal.
4. On an answer sheet you have prepared for this exercise, write the letters of towns after the numbers which correspond to the names that helped the towns to get started and develop.

Groups

- 1) Jacob Fitts, David Barker
- 2) William Chambers, John Brewer, James Van Horn
- 3) Burt Van Horn
- 4) Arthur Patterson, Otis Hathaway, Charlotte Davis
- 5) Stephen Sheldon, John Eastman, Reuben Wilson
- 6) Lemuel Cooke, John Young, Isaac Swain
- 7) Silas Hopkins, Benjamin Barton, Augustus Porter
- 8) James Howell, Parkhurst Whitney, William DeVeaux
- 9) Stephen Jacobs, George Burger
- 10) Adam Strouse, Phillip Beach
- 11) Jonathan Mabee, Enoch Hitchcock
- 12) Levi Cole, Asher Freeman
- 13) John Carney, William Crosier
- 14) Jarius Rose, Reverend Sanborn
- 15) Gideon Curtiss, Charles Quade

Settlements, villages, and cities

- A. Somerset
- B. Wilson
- C. Barker
- D. Suspension Bridge
- E. La Salle
- F. North Tonawanda
- G. Gasport
- H. Pekin
- I. Youngstown
- J. Bergholtz
- K. Lewiston
- L. Fort Schlosser
- M. Lockport
- N. Olcott
- P. Middleport
- O. Pendleton
- Q. Burt
- R. Manchester
(Niagara Falls)
- S. Newfane
- T. Sanborn
- U. Ransomville

5. Pretend you are a "War Hawk." Prepare a poster urging Americans to rise up against Great Britain.
6. Continue adding to your scrapbook of costumes. Include drawings or pictures of military and naval uniforms of the War of 1812.
7. Trace and color in the Holland Land Purchase on an outline map of New York State.
8. Make a Chamber of Commerce folder for one of the villages, towns, or cities you have read about.
9. On a map of your county, locate each town, village, and city. Use symbols to classify.

10. On a map of New York State show the main routes by which settlers traveled to Niagara County.
11. "The Erie Canal spelled 'doom' or 'boom' for many Niagara County towns and cities." Explain this statement to your classmates using examples and visual aids. (blackboard, maps, pictures, charts, etc.)
12. Select a member of the class to make a crossword puzzle using the names of settlements mentioned in Unit III. Request that your teacher approve it for mimeographing or blackboard use.
13. Re-read the section on the Gillet Family. Then, pretending you are either Mrs. Gillet or her son, Orville, write an account of your escape from Lewiston.
14. Complete the following chart using your own municipal government as the source of information.

Government Officers	Duties	Term of Office	How Chosen
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15. Pretend that you have a time machine which can transport you through the centuries. Travel back to the year 1800. Write a newspaper article predicting future town and city development, mentioning, of course, what will happen to some of them by the 1960's.
16. Compare the services your community offers with those of a neighboring one. Do this by making two lists.
17. Prepare a bulletin board display on frontier life.
18. There are two sides to most questions. Imagine that some of your classmates are Seneca Indians siding with Red Jacket against the purchase of Western New York; other members of the class are Indians favoring the purchase. Write a short article in support of Red Jacket's objections and another against his objections.
19. Visit the city hall in your hometown to get budget figures for the current fiscal year. Then construct two circle graphs: one to show where the tax dollar goes and one to show where it comes from (collections and expenditures).
20. List the steps usually followed in the development of a settlement from wilderness outpost to village.
21. Middleport struggled with the problems of incorporating as a municipal body, and La Salle faced much the same problem. Should a small community become a larger one, for example,

change from village to city? Before such a question can be resolved there are many things to consider. Select a group to debate or discuss whether La Salle should have merged into a city. Consider:

- The legal requirements (state law) it had to meet.
 - The advantages and disadvantages of merging.
 - Whether the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?
22. Write a page or two of a diary which might have been kept by an American seaman during the days he was seized from his ship by the British.
 23. Interview a councilman to find out how your municipal government makes a law. Report the procedure to the class.
 24. What is the difference in organization between a city with a mayor and one with a manager? Show this difference with a chart comparing the three branches of local government.

Books with exciting stories

- Adams, Samuel Hopkins, *Canal Town*. Fiction. Adult.
- , *The Erie Canal* (Landmark). Grades 6-10.
- Berry, Frick, *Lock Her Through*. Fiction. Grades 7-10.
- Best, A. C., *Homespun*. Grades 6-10.
- Chambers, Robert W., *The Little Red Fort*. Grades 6-10.
- , *West to the Setting Sun*. Grades 7-12.
- Edmonds, Walter D., *Erie Water*. Fiction. Grades 10-12.
- , *Mostly Canallers*. Fiction. Grades 6-12.
- , *Wilderness Clearing*. Fiction. Grades 7-12.
- Greene, Nelson, *Old Mohawk Turnpike Book*. Grades 9-12.
- Harlow, Alvin F., *When Horses Pulled Boats*. Grades 7-10.
- Langdale, Hazel, *Mark of Seneca Basin*. Fiction. Grades 5-7.
- Meadowcroft, Enid L., *Along the Erie Towpath*. Fiction. Grades 4-9.
- Merrill, Arch, *The Lakes Country*. Grades 9-12.
- , *The Ridge, Ontario's Blossom Country*. Grades 7-12.
- , *Stagecoach Towns*. Grades 6-10.
- , *The Towpath*. Grades 6-12.
- Orton, Helen F., *The Treasure in the Little Trunk*. Fiction. Grades K-6.
- Williams, Clara T., *Joseph Elicott and Stories of the Holland Land Purchase*. Adult.
- Wonsetter, A. H., and J. C., *Me and the General*. Grades 6-10.

Part IV

NIAGARA COUNTY GROWS WITH STATE AND NATION

- 9. A frontier of America grows strong
- 10. Niagara County reflects national growth
- 11. Niagara County and the nation face
problems together

9. A frontier of America grows strong

In 1825 Niagara County was a half-settled frontier; fifty years later it was a thriving area of farms and industries. Its change from a frontier to a strong part of State and Nation is the story of this chapter. Although most events in these pages happened only in Niagara County, this chapter could be the story of any American frontier area. Not only Niagara County but the whole American frontier faced plagues, the opening of canals and railroads, political campaigns, the slavery problem, and the Civil War.

Opening the Erie Canal brings fifty years of change

What led to the "wedding of waters"?

Governor DeWitt Clinton opened the canal at Buffalo

Buffalo was astir before sun-up on October 26, 1825. The bright morning held a whiff of fall as people moved about in a pink dawn. By seven-thirty, canal diggers, carrying polished shovels, moved to their places. Masons, carpenters, sailors, stone-cutters, and axmen gathered in bunches. By nine, the militia, with their officers on horseback, had taken their places. At nine-fifteen, the groups formed ranks, while the Buffalo Village Band, making last minute adjustments, tapped drums and tooted trumpets.

At nine-thirty the parade moved smartly toward the canal, drums rolling and bugles piercing the frosty October morning. With flags billowing in a gentle wind, they marched proudly down streets lined with cheering crowds. Excited children ran alongside brightly dressed militia and ragged ranks of canal workers. Wives, families, and friends shouted and waved happily to marching men.

The parade halted at the canal head. In the canal basin gaily painted canal boats, jammed with villagers, rocked gently on the water. The crowds fell silent as DeWitt Clinton, Governor and canal builder, arose to speak. Standing bareheaded on the swaying deck of the *Seneca Chief*, he addressed congratulations to the crowd.

After the speech ended, the Governor and other officials remained standing and waved to wildly cheering villagers. Horses on the tow-path strained in harness and boats glided forward. As the *Seneca Chief* and two other boats moved slowly eastward, cannons roared farewell. And one after another, cannons along the entire waterway thundered news of the Governor's departure from Buffalo. Villagers yelled and cheered themselves hoarse as the boats passed from sight.

Nosing toward Pendleton, the boats slipped through an autumn countryside splashed with red, yellow, and orange. At points along the canal, people gathered to cheer the small fleet. Some had waited hours in the chilly dawn to make sure they saw the historic trip. Sometimes a ragged frontier family standing on the canal edge watched in awe as the procession passed. Children broke from the groups and ran along the canal bank, waving to officials on the horse-drawn boats.



Traveling along the Erie Canal, speed limit 4 miles per hour.



October 26, 1825, the official opening of the Erie Canal.

Lockport celebrated the opening of the canal locks

Meanwhile, in the grey light of early dawn, Lockport also bustled like a Saturday afternoon. Ladies in satin and lace sat in open carriages driven by men in top hats and long coats. Militiamen, their belt-buckles and muskets glittering, formed ranks in dusty streets. Horsemen made their way through crowds of merchants, canal workers, and pioneers.

When the sun pushed shadows from doorways and alleys, the parade stood ready to march. Then drums and bugles rolled on the October air as the parade swung forward to the beat of the music. Villagers crowding the streets shouted and cheered as the parade marched by. The parade halted in the canal basin below the locks. The crowds, rimming the high edge of the canal basin and swarming about the canal locks, watched the opening ceremony. Aboard the brightly decorated *William C. Bouck*, village leaders praised the canal and the men who built it. On the nearby *Albany* two hundred women, in gay bonnets and fine dresses, added a touch of elegance.

Cannons booming from Buffalo announced the Governor's departure. Then Lockport's cannon flashed and thundered in the morning sun. Crowds cheered as Lockport's boats entered the locks. Water gushed into one lock after another and lifted the boats over the escarpment. There the boats halted. And with heads bowed, a hushed crowd listened to a few words of prayer. Then the boats glided south toward Pendleton, hauled by horses on the tow-path.

At Pendleton, the Lockport boats joined the Governor's fleet and escorted it back to Lockport. Lockport exploded again with cheering, shouting, and cannon fire when the crowds sighted the procession. Later, the Governor waved to the yelling and excited villagers as he rode through the streets to the Washington House. The celebration and elaborate dinner at the hotel ended with a few words from Governor Clinton.

The Governor's fleet reached the ocean At night, with passengers sleeping quietly, the Governor's fleet slipped eastward toward New York City. Along the way other pressing throngs in other canal towns welcomed the Governor. Finally, in New York harbor, DeWitt Clinton poured a keg of Lake Erie water into the Atlantic Ocean in a "wedding of waters."

Niagara County gives birth to a new political party

Excitement over the Erie Canal had hardly quieted before a larger storm shook Niagara County. In 1826 one of the strangest

affairs in Western New York took place. It soon reached into the Governor's mansion and even into the White House. It led to public meetings, state and local investigations, and violent community arguments. Finally from the confusion arose a new political party and a new way of choosing candidates for president.

Why did feelings against the Masons develop?

William Morgan threatened to reveal masonic secrets

The tale began with William Morgan, a stone mason always in debt. Morgan, hounded by bill collectors, plotted to make a fortune by publishing the secrets of the Masonic brotherhood. Some worried Masons, without approval of the Masonic Order, moved swiftly to block his plans.

On September 11, 1826, a Canandaigua constable, a Mason himself, seized Morgan in Batavia for stealing a shirt and tie. The constable and several other men then hurried him to Canandaigua for trial, away from his friends. Because of lack of evidence, he was released from this charge. However, he was rearrested and jailed for failure to pay a debt. With Morgan in their grasp, the men hoped to frighten him into silence. But he did not frighten easily. So they took a bold step to silence him.

At nine o'clock on the evening of September 12, Morgan was sleeping in his cell. Dim light from a flickering lantern cast gloomy shadows on the walls. His jailer was strangely absent, leaving his wife in charge of the jail. The outside door suddenly swung open. Several men tramped into the jail. They paid Morgan's debt and talked the jailor's wife into releasing Morgan. She unlocked the cell door. The three men ordered Morgan to dress, saying they had paid his debt and were taking him on a trip.

As he stepped into the night, from the blackness men grabbed hold of him. He yelled murder twice before the men calmed him down. He was forced into the carriage and several men scrambled in beside him. The driver whipped the horses to a gallop, and the carriage sped down the dark road toward Rochester.

The strange group moved on west, rocking and jolting over the Ridge Road. They halted several times along the way and switched horses and carriages. At Wrights Corners they stopped for about two hours. Then they continued West. In Lewiston they put Morgan into a stagecoach and they rolled north to Fort Niagara.

Inside Niagara, the coach came to a stop at the 1812 graveyard. The men took Morgan from the coach and then ferried him across the Niagara River to Canada. But Canadian Masons were not ready to take him. So Morgan was brought back to Fort Niagara and locked in the French powder magazine. Here Colonel Ezekiel

Jewett, commander of the fort, and other men talked with him about where he had hidden his papers exposing the secrets of the Masons. Sometime between September fourteenth and nineteenth, Morgan vanished forever.

Some weeks later, when Morgan had not returned and nothing could be learned of his whereabouts, there was a wave of indignation throughout Western New York. Morgan's friends called a public meeting in Batavia and a committee to investigate his disappearance was appointed. At meetings in Lewiston, Lockport, and other villages indignant citizens blamed the Masons for Morgan's disappearance and demanded action against all Masons.

Politicians made matters much worse by stirring up anti-Mason feelings to gain office. In anti-Masonic newspapers, Masons were described as cutthroats, murderers, and traitors. Anti-Masons said Masons held judges and juries and sheriffs in their clutches. Anti-Masonic politicians, riding high on a wave of hate, were swept into office. In the 1828 election, a few Masons were elected to public office.

John Spencer investigated Morgan's disappearance Anti-Masons demanded that New York State look into Morgan's disappearance. State lawmakers appointed John Spencer to dig out the truth. Notes threatening his life failed to frighten Spencer from investigating Morgan's disappearance. Spencer's investigations led to charges against Colonel Jewett and other Masons. Jewett stood trial in Lockport. The village was jammed with people flocking to the trial. Crowds gathered at taverns, homes, and street corners. Some paraded through the streets yelling and threatening to harm Masons. Few stopped to reason that the Masonic Order could not be held responsible for the actions of a few members who acted on their own, and without authority.

The trial came to a climax when Orsamus Turner, Mason and newspaper owner, walked through the packed courtroom to the witness stand. Looking worn and tired, Turner placed his hand on the Bible and repeated the oath. Then he lowered himself into the witness chair. He leaned forward a bit and waited for the question he knew was coming. John Spencer, his rugged face calm and his voice reaching every corner, asked about Col. Jewett's part in Morgan's disappearance. Turner's lips tightened to a firm line and remained closed. Spencer asked again. The crowd listened in strained silence. No answer. Judge William Marcy warned Turner to speak. Again Spencer's voice carried about the packed courtroom. Again Turner refused to answer. Finally Judge Marcy pounded the gavel

and ordered Turner imprisoned for contempt of court. The crowd let out an angry breath. The sheriff's deputies led Turner through a mob to the jail. In later days anti-Masonic feeling almost burst into violence and bloodshed.

How did anti-Masonic feeling find expression in national politics?

The Anti-Masonic party was formed and a new way of choosing candidates was adopted

Although the trials ended without a legal murder or kidnapping conviction against the Masons, anti-Masonic feeling spread swiftly. The case of the missing William Morgan became a national issue. Anti-Masons formed a political party and in 1832 sent state delegates to a national convention in Baltimore to choose a candidate for president. The Anti-Masonic party's convention system replaced the old way of having party leaders choose candidates. Soon other parties used the convention system of choosing candidates. Thus Morgan's disappearance brought a more democratic way of choosing candidates for president.

Plague and panic visit Niagara County

What effect did Asiatic cholera have on people?

People sickened and died

In the hot summer of 1832, while the Anti-Masonic party held its Baltimore convention, terror and death swept across the Niagara Frontier. Cholera, a deadly disease carried by travelers from Asia, raced through Europe. And in May and June cholera-stricken immigrants brought the disease to Canada. From Quebec and Montreal it swept along the northern shore of Lake Ontario southwest through Ontario, leaving a wake of dead and dying. In July, cholera leaped the Niagara River and struck hard at Niagara County and the Niagara frontier. Cholera also reached Niagara from the east. Immigrants carried the disease to New York City. It sped north along the Hudson River and then westward along the canal hitting hard at most canal towns.

Summer came early in 1832, hot and rainy. Ground steamed under the burning sun and soaring temperatures. Heat turned backyard garbage heaps into possible breeding grounds for cholera and death. Flies could carry Asiatic cholera from sewage to water, milk, and food.

Early in July, a worker complained of headache and blamed it on the heat. Elsewhere a scattered handful of people also blamed heat and humidity for throbbing headaches. But stomach cramps, vomiting, and collapse swiftly followed headaches. Within twenty-four hours, the sick took their last breath, and died. At first doctors called it food poisoning. But as it struck more and more frequently, frightened people knew a strange plague had come. What caused it, or how to fight it, no one knew. Not all villages on the Niagara Frontier were equally hard hit. A look at Buffalo and Lockport during the plague will bear this out.

**Fear paralyzed
Niagara County and
the whole Niagara
Frontier**

Citizens panicked in Buffalo. Some packed up and fled at the first out-break, spreading the plague. Others locked themselves in their houses. Stores, shops, and businesses closed. The few people walking the silent streets eyed each other for signs of the plague, afraid to draw near. Starvation threatened as farmers refused to haul food into villages and drove off those coming to buy it. Armed villagers halted boats, stage-coaches, and strangers, driving off the sick. Buffalo was especially hard hit by cholera.

Cholera hit rich and poor alike, leaving many broken families. It raged in the crowded, dirty shanties of the poor. Some sick lay uncared for. Village leaders, worried about spreading panic, kept the number of dead a secret. At night men with wagons went through "shanty town" collecting the dead. A sickening stench hung about the shacks where the sick lay dying, unable to move. Through the hot summer nights, coffin-makers and grave diggers sweated to bury the dead before morning.

Lockport also suffered from the plague, but nowhere as badly as Buffalo. About seventy-five cases of cholera were reported in July, August, and September, and about a dozen deaths resulted. But as soon as village officials realized the extent of the plague, they took steps to control it. Health officials halted all canal boats and refused to allow them to enter or leave until they were sure no passengers carried cholera. Health officials also had lime spread about the village to counteract the disease-breeding spots. For a time that hot summer, it looked like a light snowfall had hit the village.

Unlike Buffalo, cholera did not produce a great panic in Lockport. Almost from the beginning health officials were able to control the plague, largely by quarantine, even if they were not sure what caused it.

But much of the Niagara Frontier suffered as Buffalo did. In spite of what people did, cholera stormed through the countryside. Some people stayed drunk, hoping to prevent or cure the disease. Others took a mixture of whiskey and gunpowder, or sulphur and molasses. Nothing helped. At last the plague ran its course, disappearing with cold weather. Then the saddened countryside counted up the loss of life. Of all the larger villages, only Niagara Falls escaped the plague of 1832.

Cholera struck again very lightly in 1834, in 1854, and very rarely in later years, but it never produced the terror of that first time. People gradually overcame their fears and learned how to control the spread of the disease.

What caused the Panic of 1837?

**Easy credit led to
over-expansion**

The cholera epidemic had not long passed before a new panic hit Niagara County. The Erie Canal, choked with boats and cargoes heading east and west, brought a boom to Western New York. Land prices soared, and businessmen scrambled for choice village lots. Money for more land was easy to borrow. President Andrew Jackson added to the boom by placing some United States money in state banks in Buffalo. With more money to lend, banks gave credit to people who might not be able to pay it back. The banks loaned money freely to many of these poor risks.

**Benjamin Rathbun
set an example**

Some land buyers and builders rose rapidly to power and wealth. Benjamin Rathbun, a Buffalo land speculator, interested many people in his schemes for quick money. In Buffalo seventeen buildings sprouted in ninety days under his magic touch. Public faith in him soared. Everywhere people hounded him to invest their money.

Rathbun took their money and continued building. To supply his vast projects he contracted with brickyards, stone quarries, sawmills, and a stagecoach line. He even started his own bank and printed paper money to pay his debts.

**Niagara Falls joined
the spending spree**

Citizens of Niagara Falls, Lockport, and other villages, dazzled by what he had done in Buffalo, fell under the spell of his plans to make everyone rich. They eagerly handed over their savings to the money-maker from Buffalo. Niagara Falls gave heavily, especially after Rathbun laid foundations for several hotels and other buildings in the village.

Banks were ordered to call in loans But suddenly the boom collapsed. Dreams of quick money came tumbling down. President Jackson ordered state banks to pay debts in gold and silver. Banks had loaned Federal money to poor risks, and when they had to call in these loans, people could not pay. Unable to raise money, banks collapsed and so did many of their clients, including Rathbun. The glitter surrounding Rathbun dimmed quickly. Caught in a web of forgery, he was later imprisoned in a jail he had built.

Meanwhile people tried to save a few of the pieces. Some tried to sell land, but they had paid too much and could not get their money back. They panicked. Banks and businesses folded, throwing men out of work. Without help of any sort, workers faced hunger and misery.

Unable to understand what had happened, many willingly followed anyone who might put bread into the mouths of their families. In Canada there was such a man who promised land to Americans who followed him. His activities were daring and dangerous and would soon involve Niagara County. His name was William Lyons Mackenzie.

Rebellion flares up in Canada

How did the rebellion bring trouble to Niagara County?

William Mackenzie recruited Americans to fight in Canada Taking advantage of the smoldering hate French Canadians felt for British rule, Mackenzie led them in an attempt to drive the British from Canada. In a battle with the British he was defeated and fled to Buffalo. There he made the Eagle Tavern his headquarters, and began recruiting Americans for his army.

Americans welcomed Mackenzie as a hero. Many saw Canada's Patriot's War as the American Revolution all over again. And they viewed Mackenzie as another George Washington, hard pressed by the British. Americans gladly gave men, money, and munitions to the rebel cause. Mackenzie's promise of Canadian farms to followers also drew many Americans without jobs because of the Panic of 1837. Other Americans saw a chance to annex Canada. Flocking to his rebel banner, they marched through streets singing the French national anthem, the "Marseillaise."



December 29, 1837, the Caroline having been set a fire by the British begins to break up in the rapids above Horseshoe Fall.

The *Caroline* supplied the rebels

With American aid, Mackenzie moved his headquarters to Navy Island, up river from the Falls. The rebels used a small steamship, the *Caroline*, to supply forces on Navy Island. On December 29, 1837, the little steamer chugged across the river to Navy Island, unloading men and supplies. That evening a cheering crowd greeted the *Caroline* when it docked at Fort Schlosser. Later that evening, more men tramped aboard, ready to leave at dawn for Navy Island.

For a good part of the night, the *Caroline* was in an uproar. In the main cabin a lantern swayed gently overhead, casting a dull light on men sprawled in bunks and on the deck around a pot-bellied stove. The odors of tobacco, whiskey, damp wool, and sweat filled the hot cabin; heavy moisture on the cold windows dripped onto the deck. With New Year's a few days away, men celebrated by passing a whiskey jug and playing cards. Heat and whiskey loosened tongues, and loud talk filled the cabin.

As the men aboard the *Caroline* loafed, the British in Canada put into action plans of their own. On this night of December 29, 1837, they jammed into boats and pushed out onto the moonlit Niagara River, gliding silently toward Niagara County. They neared shore above Fort Schlosser. Keeping close to the dark, wooded bank, they drifted down river. Finally they bumped gently against the side of the *Caroline*. Swiftly they clambered aboard the steamer and smashed into cabins, guns ready. Cursing and yelling men, forced on deck at gun point, stumbled down the gang-plank to shore. Once on shore, they turned on their guards. Muskets flamed in the blackness. A rebel, Amos Durfee, dropped dying to the ground. Several others pressed their hands to wounds trying to check the bleeding.

Burning of the *Caroline* brought war talk

Aboard the *Caroline*, a match sputtered, outlining the cupped hands of a British soldier. The tiny flame touched a pile of trash. Soon flames raced up cabin walls and along the deck. The blazing *Caroline* lighted the dark river. The British then towed the steamship to mid-river. They cut it loose and watched it drift toward the rapids and Horseshoe Fall. Then they rowed back to Canada.

The burning of the *Caroline* sent waves of war talk up and down the frontier. Amos Durfee, his coffin draped with flags, had a public funeral in Buffalo. In Lewiston, Niagara Falls, Lockport, and other villages, meetings, newspapers, and parades expressed American rage at the British for burning the *Caroline*.

Hotheaded Americans planned revenge. In May, 1838, Americans, yelling, "Remember the *Caroline*," burned the Canadian ship

Sir Robert Peel on the St. Lawrence. In Lewiston angry citizens held a public meeting and burned books of a novelist who defended the burning of the *Caroline*. In June, two hundred men gathered near Lewiston to invade Canada. But at the last minute only twenty-three men would enter the boats. The invasion collapsed.

What action did the United States Government take?

Seeking to avoid war, the United States Government sent an army to check hot-heads along the border. Mackenzie's forces on Navy Island gave up plans to invade Canada and gradually the frontier quieted down.

Prejudice helps create the American party

What conditions in Niagara County spread prejudice?

Immigrants competed successfully for jobs

Once the war threat passed, a more sinister issue cast its shadow across Niagara County. During the 1840's and 1850's a flood of Irish and German immigrants crowded cities in the eastern United States. The potato famine in Ireland and the failure of the 1849 revolution in Germany turned the thoughts of thousands to America. Ship after ship, jammed with immigrants, sailed for the United States. Penniless and homeless foreigners gratefully worked long hours for low wages. Complaining bitterly, American workmen watched the foreign-born newcomers replace them in mills and work gangs.

Like thousands before them, the immigrants quickly adjusted to American life. In a short time, many entered business and politics. American-born businessmen resented the loss of their customers to German and Irish shopkeepers, and joined the growing clamor against immigrants. Leading "old" families, long holders of public office, felt the press of immigrants. Pushed from office by immigrant politicians, they threw their support behind groups opposing foreigners.

Competition between foreign-born and native-born Americans led to bitterness and strife. In troubled times, people glancing around for someone to blame found the foreign-born easy targets. The thick accent of hardworking Germans and the pleasant brogue of Irish laborers became targets for hatred. The religion of new immigrants was another thing some people disliked. Many people refused to hire German and Irish workers. American-born workers especially disliked the Irish Catholics who snapped up unskilled jobs. Many Americans hummed and whistled a hit tune of the time, "No Irish Need Apply."

**Many feared
foreigners would
take over the country**

As the immigrant tide rose, many Americans honestly believed the foreign-born would soon swamp the "native" Americans. As they saw it, it was only a matter of time before immigrants took over the country, changed the Constitution, and forced a new religion upon them.

How did politicians take advantage of the situation?

**The Know-Nothings
appeared**

Quick to catch the drift of public prejudice, politicians hammered away at foreign-born Americans, especially the Irish. Fearful "native" Americans formed the Know-Nothing party, later known as the American party. When asked who their members were American party followers replied, "I don't know." The tag "Know-Nothings" stuck to them.

The Know-Nothings wanted to hold down immigrants under harsh laws. They hoped to elect "native" Americans to office, and to require twenty-one years for immigrants to gain citizenship. They also demanded laws forbidding immigrants from holding public office.

Some people in Niagara County eagerly hailed the Know-Nothing party. Much of the population here had come west from New England and their families had lived in America for generations. They had opened up Niagara County to settlement, fighting hunger, disease, and Indians. Forgetting that their ancestors had been immigrants also, they resented the "pushiness" of newcomers.

Many leading men rallied round the banner of the American party. Isaac Cooke of Lewiston, Parkhurst Whitney and Theodore Hulett of Niagara Falls, and later ex-governor Washington Hunt of Lockport supported the American party. Rallies and torchlight parades whipped up excitement for the Know-Nothings. Party members and supporters wore hats and buttons with mottoes attacking immigrants. And they bought Know-Nothing candy, tea, and toothpicks. They tried to buy only goods with an American party mark showing it was made by "native" Americans.

But the American party had strong opposition. Some leaders recognized the danger to freedom in the ideas held by Know-Nothings. In the Niagara Falls election of 1856, James Trott and Peter B. Porter ran on the Anti-American party ballot, opposing Parkhurst Whitney and Theodore Hulett. In the election, although Whitney and Hulett won in Niagara Falls, the rest of Niagara County went Democratic, thus defeating the American party.

The Irish and Germans did not take Know-Nothing attacks calmly. Gangs of Irish workers attacked the people wearing Know-Nothing buttons and hats. In Lewiston they stoned the home of a leading Know-Nothing and got shot at for their trouble. But violence led only to more violence. It settled nothing.

**Manchester took time
out to celebrate be-
coming the village of
Niagara Falls**

For a time, as the Know-Nothing party was getting started, the people of Manchester forgot the Know-Nothing turmoil. In 1848 they took time out to celebrate the incorporation of their village. The name was legally changed from Manchester to Niagara Falls. But villagers could not long forget issues facing the nation.

As the Know-Nothing squabble rose and fell, a more deadly issue took shape. It loomed darkly over Niagara County and soon blotted out local bickerings. Striking deep into the soul of Americans, the slavery issue nearly destroyed the nation.

The slavery issue divides Niagara County

Strangely enough, the slave issue split communities where most people hated slavery. Before the fire and smoke of civil war ripped the nation apart, the Fugitive Slave Law started arguments in Niagara County. Passed in 1850, this law made it a crime to aid runaway slaves or to refuse to help hunt them down.

How did people feel about obeying the fugitive slave law?

Wherever people gathered they argued whether the hateful law should be obeyed. Many people saw a danger in refusing to obey the law. They foresaw all laws disobeyed and lawless gangs plundering and burning the countryside. But others saw the law chaining men in slavery and those enforcing it as partners of the slave owners.

**The underground
railroad violated
the law**

The Fugitive Slave Law also aimed a blow at the Underground Railroad, a secret system for aiding runaway slaves. Anti-slave people set up hiding places called "stations" along the way north to Canada. They hid slaves until night; then "conductors" carted them to the next station further north, and so on until the slaves reached Canada. Bordering Canada, Niagara County was an important Underground Railroad center. To capture escaping slaves, federal and local officers were instructed to guard bridges leading to Canada. But hundreds of slaves dodged the police and reached freedom in Canada.

Some people in Niagara County acted as "station masters" (station operators), or as conductors. They operated stations in Ransomville, Lewiston, Niagara Falls, and Lockport. From Wilson and other places along the lake, small boats set sail at night with a few slaves bound for Canada. Most communities in Niagara County aided the Underground Railroad in some way. Even the Niagara Falls *Gazette* from time to time published reports of the number of slaves who escaped to Canada.

Tales of exciting escapes have become part of Niagara County's history. One slave was caught in Lake Erie, miles from shore, using a door as a raft. Wave-tossed, exhausted, and half-dead, he clung to the door and his hope of freedom. He was picked up by a lake boat and later made it to Canada. Underground Railroad conductors hid slaves in carts, wagons, and boats. They dressed them as women or slipped them into Canada in barrels and crates. Many times slaves reached Canada just in time to escape their owners and the sheriff.

But aiding runaway slaves was a crime. Although people hated slavery, some believed the law should be obeyed or changed. To the average person, however, upholding the law meant favoring slavery. For the public, no middle ground was possible and people in the middle fell under attack from both sides.

Washington Hunt felt Out of the swirl and confusion over the failure to obey would
bring war

slave law arose the figure of Washington Hunt, Governor of New York. In 1828, at the age of seventeen, Washington Hunt had come to the village of Lockport. He worked as a frontier store clerk and later in the small law office of Lott Clark. In 1834 Hunt began practicing law, handling Clark's cases for the Albany Company, a company that had helped develop Lockport's Lowertown. In 1835 he bought up unsold lands of the Albany Company. Hard-working and honest, he soon prospered along with booming Lockport.

His friends urged him to enter politics and he joined the Democratic party. Shortly after this he held his first political job, that of county judge. But he left the Democratic party because of President Jackson's easy money policy and entered the Whig party. There he rose rapidly. From 1842 to 1849 he was a member of Congress. In 1850 Hunt was the Whig choice for Governor of New York. The convention nominating him was a stormy one; it tore the Whig party apart. Many anti-slave Whigs attacked Hunt's attitude towards the Fugitive Slave Law. But with the help of President Millard Fillmore he won the nomination and later the election, by a narrow vote. As governor, Hunt supported canal improvements

and obedience to the Fugitive Slave Law. In his legislative message, he urged lawmakers to uphold the law, hateful as it was. Failure to obey, he warned, would plunge the country into civil war.

During his term, public hate of slavery rose like a flood, sweeping everything before it. Again cunning politicians rode the wave of public feeling into office. But Hunt stood his ground. He lost the election for governor in 1852 by a large vote and was forced from the Whig party. He joined the Know-Nothing party, still hoping to avoid civil war. In 1860 he was chairman of the Constitutional Union party, and in the election he worked to keep New York from voting for Abraham Lincoln as President.



Helping slaves escape from Western New York to Canada.

The year 1864 saw Hunt at the Democratic convention, attacking Lincoln and demanding peace with the South. He might have felt differently had he been with Niagara County troops in Virginia. Although it meant more fighting, war weary soldiers cast their votes for Lincoln in 1864. With the Civil War raging, many northerners looked upon Washington Hunt as a copperhead. Three years later, in 1867, Hunt died in New York City at the age of fifty-six.

The Civil War comes

On March 4, 1861, a raw wind whipped through the streets of Washington, D.C., lifting dust clouds high into the air. Soldiers squatted on roof tops and at windows overlooking a newly-erected platform. Warned of a plot to kill Lincoln, they studied the crowd massed below for signs of assassins.

Standing on the platform amid a group of officials, Abraham Lincoln took his oath of office. Then the tall, bony man, dressed in black, gave his speech. Bareheaded, his brown hair windblown, he spoke to an uneasy crowd. Seven southern states had already withdrawn from the Union and others tottered on the edge, ready to follow. The question of war loomed darkly in many people's thoughts. And they wondered what the awkward-looking man from Illinois would do about it. They were soon to have the answer.

At four-thirty on the warm morning of April 12, Southern cannons fired at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Two days later this Union fort in Charleston harbor surrendered and the Northern troops marched out of the ruined fort to waiting boats. President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the Southern rebellion. The Civil War had begun.

How did Niagara help fight the war?

On April 15, the day after Fort Sumter fell, the people of Niagara Falls scattered leaflets in the streets, calling for a rally to save the Union. That evening, citizens flocked to the New York Central Railroad station. General Parkhurst Whitney, aged warrior of the War of 1812, rose on unsteady feet and urged the crowd to defend the Union. A cheering and yelling throng took his words to heart.

The 28th volunteers In a short time two patriots of 'Niagara was organized Falls, Theodore Gould and Justin Ware, began to raise a company. When enough men had volunteered, the group was organized as Company I of the 28th New York Volunteers. Gould was made captain and Ware, his lieutenant.

Lockport's citizens also rallied to the call to arms. E. W. Cook and William Bush, local merchants, opened their shops to enlist volunteers. Flags and patriotic signs decorated their shop windows. A small, brightly-dressed band added music to the activity. An excited crowd gathered to watch and to shout praise to the laughing and gay young men who lined up to enlist. Thrilled villagers treated their new volunteers as heroes. No party, dinner, or social gathering was a success without some volunteers present.

Lockport raised four companies, A, B, C, and G, for the 28th New York Volunteers. Cook and Bush became captains. Dudley Donnelly was appointed commander of the 28th Regiment. The whole village was whipped up with excitement over getting the companies outfitted and ready to leave.

Villagers of Niagara Falls and Lockport turned out with speeches, parades, prayers, and tears for their departing volunteers. Wealthy people in Niagara Falls raised \$7,000 to support the families of men off fighting. In Lockport a similar group also aided volunteers' families.

The 28th suffered heavy casualties

In July, the 28th skirmished with the enemy amid the green hills of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Their attempt to detain the Southern army failed and they straggled out of the Shenandoah into winter quarters in Maryland. Adding to concern over the failure of the campaign was news of troubles back home. The \$7,000 raised to care for the families of the fighting men was quickly used up. The families sent letters telling of hardships and rumors that men had to serve only three months. Spirits drooped lower. Finally Colonel Donnelly wrote to the Niagara Falls *Gazette* and to the Lockport *Union* urging families not to write any more letters about three-month enlistments.

Winter passed and the 28th made ready for the summer campaign. The "Fighting 28th" earned its name on August 9-12, 1862. Invading Virginia, Northern armies clashed with a Southern army commanded by the mighty Stonewall Jackson. At Cedar Mountain, southwest of Culpepper, Virginia, the 28th smashed into a larger Southern force and flung them back. Counter-attacking with reinforcements, Southern troops hit Union lines.

In the patches of woods near Cedar Mountain, the 28th grappled with the Southern force. Dodging, hiding, firing, the lines moved together. When the fighting became too close for muskets, bayonets flashed in bloody hand-to-hand combat. The woods caught fire. Blinded by smoke, the armies groped for each other. Lines broke into groups, fighting private wars in a sea of green and smoke.

Cries of the wounded, fearful of being left to burn, added to the confusion.

When the fighting ended in a Northern withdrawal, few men of the 28th answered muster. Men listened in silence to the roll call and looked around each time a comrade failed to answer. Colonel Donnelly had fallen among the rest. The remaining men formed four companies and in a later battle many of those still alive were taken prisoner.

**The 8th New York
Heavy Artillery
fought at Cold
Harbor**

While the 28th were in Virginia, Colonel Peter A. Porter of Niagara Falls organized the 129th, later known as the 8th New York Heavy Artillery. Men from all over Niagara County, and particularly from Niagara

Falls and Lockport, flocked to enlist.

In the summer of 1864, the "Bloody 8th" was encamped at Cold Harbor, Virginia, commanded by General Grant and facing the entrenched veterans of General Lee. During the stifling heat of June 1 and 2, poor judgment by high officers delayed the Union assault against Lee. But by sunset of June 2, a vast Northern army prepared to attack.

Expecting a dreadful slaughter, many Union soldiers, including Niagara County men, wrote their names on papers pinned to their uniforms so their bodies could be identified next morning. They wrote their final letters home as the last rays of the sun disappeared behind Southern lines. A cooling rain fell during the night, easing the misery from the stifling heat. It stopped toward morning and the dawn came hot and humid as soldiers made a last equipment check.

As the dawn cleared away the last quiet shadows, the earth trembled as cannon fire tore the morning apart, opening the attack. Then, blue-clad Union troops swept forward across open ground into the crashing shot and shell from Southern defenders. Caught in a cross-fire of artillery and muskets, the blue line staggered and then collapsed. In twenty minutes 7,000 Union soldiers lay broken, bleeding, and dead on the field. Meanwhile, Southern forces, protected by their trenches, lost few men.

After the Union line was stopped those still alive scooped shallow pits with tin cups and plates. Hugging the ground, they heaped a few inches of dirt between themselves and Southern fire. Any movement to aid the wounded drew a volley of musket fire. The day burned on, and men squirmed at the endless screams of the wounded a few yards away.

With nightfall, Union troops frantically dug trenches. When the sun rose next morning, they were well protected from Southern fire. But it was not until June 7 that a truce allowed troops to bury the dead. By that time the smell of death added to the sickening misery of Cold Harbor. Finally, on June 12, Union forces withdrew.

Cold Harbor, June 3, was a place of death for the 8th Heavy Artillery. Colonel Peter A. Porter, leading his men, fell among the dead. He lay with most of the "Bloody 8th" before the southern lines. The 8th left more men sprawled before the Confederate lines than any regiment except one. More than three-fourths of the regiment died in that twenty minutes. But part of the 8th lived to witness the Southern surrender at Appomattox.

Lockport and Niagara Falls received the news in shocked grief. Not even at Cedar Mountain had so many Niagara County men died. People searched newspaper casualty lists for news of relatives and friends. Citizens talked about the battle in hushed voices, and many families mourned the dead. Many people wondered why the endless slaughter of their young men continued.

Other important men and units left Niagara County to fight. Charles B. Gaskill, a lieutenant with the 44th Infantry, was wounded, taken prisoner and released. Colonel Lewis Payne of North Tonawanda, with the 100th, witnessed the surrender of Lee at Appomattox. The 151st and the 2nd Mounted Rifles had many enlistments from Niagara County. Finally, Niagara Falls organized the Porter Guards in memory of General Peter B. Porter, hero of the War of 1812.

Most people at home supported the war While armies smashed each other to pieces in Virginia, Niagara County showed a strange mixture of patriotism and disloyalty. On one hand, groups such as the Patriotic Citizens Fund raised money to help soldiers and their families. The Niagara Falls Soldier's Aid Society even sent Julia Griffin as a volunteer nurse to aid soldiers at the front. Time after time, women's groups made drives to raise money for the troops.

But there was another side to the war at home. While death lists grew longer day by day, some people thought of nothing but enjoying themselves. After the first drop in business passed, the newly-rich people who made money in war production, flocked to Niagara. Newspapers advertised boat rides, outings, and weekend excursions. The famous Cataract, International, and American Hotels in Niagara Falls did a tremendous business. Niagara County was caught up in a whirl of dances and parties. Each party giver tried to outdo the others. Elegant dresses appeared even at small

social affairs. Famous visitors like Mrs. Lincoln and her son Robert added glitter to the social life of wartime Niagara County.

While Niagara County men fell in battle, "skeeaddlers" tried to sneak by guards at the bridges to Canada to escape the army. Copperheads, people opposing the war, had small determined groups in Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda, and Lewiston. Moving through the night, they held meetings and nailed posters to trees urging people not to fight. After each Union loss, they appeared bolder. Ex-governor Hunt openly opposed Lincoln. Toward the end, a weary people began to ask themselves if saving the Union was worth the loss of life.

What tragedy followed the surrender?

In April, 1865, news of Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox reached Niagara County. Wildly happy crowds flooded the streets. A grateful people offered prayers for lasting peace. And when the first troops returned home, Niagara County greeted them with bands and cheering crowds.

A few days later, stunning news ended the rejoicing. A shocked nation learned of the assassination of President Lincoln. Silent crowds streamed into Buffalo as his body lay in state before going on to burial in Springfield, Illinois.

**Lockport City and
North Tonawanda
Village celebrated
incorporation**

In the midst of this excitement, Lockport celebrated its incorporation as the first city in Niagara County, and North Tonawanda was officially incorporated as a village.

Trouble with Canada and the Panic of 1873 followed war

Why did Fenians fail to achieve their purpose?

Shortly after Lockport city and North Tonawanda village were incorporated, more trouble started along the Niagara Frontier. After the Civil War a secret Irish brotherhood, the Fenians, drifted toward Niagara County. They planned to capture Canada, involve the United States and Great Britain in a war, and so win independence for Ireland. The invasion of Canada in the summer of 1866 was more like a comedy than a war. A few hundred Fenians landed at Fort Erie and after the "Battle of Ridgeway," they retreated to the United States. The Fenians tried another invasion in 1870, but the United States Government rounded up the ring-leaders and the invasion collapsed.

Why did panic strike?

Between 1865 and 1873 Niagara County enjoyed a boom period which had begun with the war. Business expanded rapidly and people spent money wildly. When the war was over, all looked forward to lasting prosperity. But the day of reckoning came, and the good times came to a sudden end. Banks and business folded and wide-spread unemployment caused hardships among the poor. But by 1875 Niagara County had recovered and was moving ahead in a spurt of new growth. Interest in harnessing the power of Niagara caused a period of industrial growth that in time made the area a world leader in hyro-electric power.

The year 1875 marked the end of a half-century of struggle in Niagara County. During this time the region had changed from a half-settled frontier to a thriving section of the state and nation. Surviving cholera, hard times, Know-Nothings, the slave issue, and the Civil War, it merged to take its place on an equal footing with other parts of the nation.

10. Niagara County reflects national growth

For Niagara County, the half-century before 1875 was a time of growth. In these fifty years a struggling frontier became a settled section of the nation. In the next twenty-six years, between 1875 and 1901, Niagara County played a more important role in national growth. It was no longer concerned only with local problems. In its own way it faced political scandals, tariff issues, labor trouble, Pan-Americanism, and President McKinley's assassination.

Political scandals influence the election of 1876

What scandals weakened the Republican party?

**Fraud involving the
whiskey tax and
Indians caused
excitement**

Gradually the Panic of 1873 passed and the coming election for President turned people's thoughts toward politics. As the 1876 election neared, the campaign centered around the dishonesty of Republicans in



Lumber was an important resource in Niagara County.

office. Republican President Grant, ex-commander of the Union Armies, had chosen some men for office who betrayed his trust. Underhanded deals and outright thievery took place during his years as President. Democratic newspapers used big headlines to report Republican political scandals. Newspapers had front-page stories about inspectors and whiskey makers who cheated the government of whiskey taxes. This gang, known as the Whiskey Ring, was only one of several groups involved in wrongdoing. Another headline scandal involved the Secretary of the Interior, Belknap, and some of his trader friends who cheated the Indians. These scandals, as well as earlier ones, gave Democrats plenty of ammunition for the coming election.

The Canal Ring shocked Niagara County

As political scandals hit the nation, New York and Niagara County were shocked at political dishonesty in their own backyard. The investigation of canal frauds reached into many communities; in Lockport it involved some of the leading families in the city.

In May, 1875, excited people read the newspaper accounts of the grand jury indictments against canal officials. The Canal Superintendent, his henchmen, and several others were charged with stealing money from the state. They had made false statements about work done on the canal and had charged the state for more hours of work than had really been done. They also were charged with making out payrolls listing men not even working on the canal. When the state had sent payroll money, the Canal Superintendent and his friends paid off the actual workers and kept the rest of the money.

The Canal Superintendent's gang was not the only one mixed up in the canal scandals. Canal Commissioners were also under

attack for fraud. The law said that no commissioner could have any business connections with any company dealing with the canal. But one commissioner's lumber company on Eighteen Mile Creek filled most canal orders for lumber. And his lumber mill used overflow canal water to run its machinery.

The grand jury indictments had the usually quiet city of Lockport buzzing. Citizens began to suspect other city officials. Republican newspapers stirred up further excitement by printing attacks on the Canal Ring that was led by rival Democratic leaders.

What was unusual about the election of 1876?

As the 1876 election of president drew near, the campaign became more heated. Republicans had to defend President Grant and his dishonest friends. When the Democrats pressed them too hard, Republicans reminded Democrats of the Canal Ring. The Democrats, led by the *Lockport Times*, pressed the attack and clashed with the Republicans, defended by the *Niagara Falls Gazette*. Through these newspapers, Democrats and Republicans carried on a running battle in the months before and after the election.

In the summer of 1876 the Republicans chose Rutherford B. Hayes to run for president against Samuel Tilden, Democratic governor of New York. In the weeks before the election, the *Times* and *Gazette* pounded each other in a last minute attempt to win votes. On election day, thinking the battle ended, they sat back and waited for the election returns.

But the battle was not finished. Tilden swept Niagara County, but he needed one more electoral vote to win the Presidency. Four states showed two sets of returns, one for Tilden and one for Hayes. The election depended on which set of returns would be counted.

The Lockport *Times* claimed Tilden elected, but the Niagara Falls *Gazette* was just as strong for Hayes. The final task of choosing the new president fell upon Congress. A special committee of eight Republicans and seven Democrats investigated the returns from the four states. Months passed as the committee fought over the returns. Tilden needed only one more electoral vote, and Hayes needed all the disputed votes to win. When the committee finally reported, every electoral vote went to Hayes. The Democratic minority on the committee could not get one vote for Tilden.

The Lockport *Times* angrily attacked the report as another example of Republican treachery. The *Gazette*, meanwhile, was equally strong in its support of the committee. Rumors of mob violence had both newspapers worried. The *Gazette* made a plea for law and order. Samuel Tilden and Democratic newspapers also urged the people to accept the committee's decision. Although they accepted the result, Democrats bitterly nicknamed Hayes, "Old Eight to Seven."

The Republicans take over county politics

Although Niagara County voted Democratic in 1876, the Republicans swiftly regained control of county politics. Four men brought this about—General Benjamin Flagler and Major James Low of Suspension Bridge, and Colonel Timothy Ellsworth and John Merritt of Lockport. These Republican leaders bossed county politics until 1917.

How did the "Big Four" win control?

Each of these men had held the position of Collector of Customs, the highest paying political job in the county. With this position they also had the power to appoint people to forty other jobs. Through these forty jobs they controlled many others. So the people depending upon the Republican party for their jobs worked hard to win votes for Republican candidates. Thus, few Democrats ever represented Niagara County in state and national legislatures. Except for the support given Tilden and Cleveland, the area remained in the hands of the Republican party until the 1930's.

What part did they play in the birth of the city of Niagara Falls?

The Republican Big Four also took part in the most important events in Niagara County. Major James Low and General Benjamin Flagler played an important part in the forming of a new city in 1892.

During and after the Civil War, Niagara Falls and Suspension Bridge expanded rapidly. But the cost of running the villages grew also. Village businessmen saw the answer to these problems in uniting the two villages. Suspension Bridge was an important rail center and Niagara Falls was a power center. By joining, they could take advantage of each other's business and cut the costs of providing water, light, sanitation, and police and fire protection.

Major James Low was chosen president of the joint committee from Suspension Bridge and Niagara Falls to draw up a charter for the new city. Under his leadership, the committee planned, debated, and compromised. Finally the charter was ready. In March of 1892, the two villages became the City of Niagara Falls. In the first city elections in April, General Benjamin Flagler ran for mayor, but was defeated by George Wright, a Democrat.

The celebrations of the new city lasted for days, and happy citizens talked endlessly of the wondrous and prosperous future. They were right. Niagara Falls was in the middle of a great power boom. New industry moved in to take advantage of power and transportation. With industries came growth in population. Land prices soared, doubling in four years. For a time Niagara Falls was the fastest growing city in the state.

North Tonawanda is torn by labor troubles

Almost before the celebrations of the new city ended, violence touched Niagara County. While Niagara Falls was prospering, the Panic of 1893 struck the nation. In protest against increasingly bad times, bloody strikes broke out during the summer of 1892. One community in Niagara County had a part in this national labor violence.

Why did labor troubles result in violence?

North Tonawanda lumber mills employed most of the men in the village, and working conditions were worse than in surrounding areas. Many families, living in miserable poverty, felt the pinch of hunger. Attempts to raise wages ended in failure. The men never knew from one day to the next if they had a job or what wages they would take home.

The stevedore system was the source of trouble

Bitterness in North Tonawanda centered around the stevedore system. Lumber owners paid the work-gang bosses, called stevedores, a fixed sum to hire gangs to unload lumber barges and ships. The stevedores, in turn, paid the work

gangs under them. If they could hire men for less money, or hire fewer men and work them longer, they kept the remaining money. If the men complained, the stevedores fired them, and no other stevedore would hire them. The stevedores also paid the gangs in saloons owned by friends. They got a percentage of the money that the workers spent on liquor. With hard times upon them and families to feed, the men put up with these conditions.

The lumber owners, on the other hand, found the stevedore system a necessary part of business. It cut costs and allowed them to handle lumber cheaper than surrounding areas. And as long as they had the stevedores, they did not have to deal directly with the men. If men complained, they usually told them to see their stevedore. Lumber owners also feared that without the stevedores they would have to deal with the Lumber Shovers Union. Above all, the owners hated to see labor unions come. They saw unions as an evil, bringing higher wages and ruining business. So lumber owners were determined to keep the old system.

Strike-breakers were called in In June, 1892, the angry workers went on strike. They refused to return to work until the stevedore system ended and their union was recognized. The lumber owners sent out a call for non-union members to replace the strikers. If lumber owners could get the lumber unloaded without union workers, then the strike would collapse and so would the union. The union workers recognized this and decided to stop lumber unloadings at all costs.

The lines were clearly drawn and violence was only a matter of time. It rained too hard during the first week of the strike to unload the lumber. Daily downpours made ponds in the streets and drenched the lumber docks. For each day a ship or barge lay by the docks, owners had to pay an extra fee. As steamships and barges piled up waiting to unload, the owners had to act.

On June 10, the clouds broke and the sun shone down on the soggy, strike-bound village. Workers, watching the owners' movements, spread the word of an attempt to unload the lumber next day. In turn, lumber company spies in the union reported plans to stop unloadings.

On Saturday morning, June 11, strikers reported that there were non-union workers at the lumber docks. At 10:30 union leaders held a secret meeting at their headquarters in St. Louis Hall and decided to act. As planned before hand, they sent out the call to union members. By 11:00 a shouting mob of five hundred, waving clenched fists, clubs, rocks, and pipes, gathered in the muddy street before union headquarters. At an angry order from their leaders, they splashed through streets toward the lumber docks.

News of the coming mob passed swiftly to the docks. Police Chief Ryan and eight armed men stood on the docks to protect the strike-breakers. They watched the angry mob swing the corner into full view, filling the street from sidewalk to sidewalk. As the nervous men on the docks stopped working, Chief Ryan ordered his men to defend the bridge leading to the docks.



Violence erupts in the North Tonawanda lumber industry.

When the mob drew near, he ordered them to halt. But at the sight of the strike-breakers, the enraged mob pushed forward. On the bridge, tightfaced police, guns in hand, waited for orders. Again Chief Ryan ordered the mob to halt. But they broke into a run. They brushed the police aside and poured onto the docks. The police made one last attempt to halt violence by firing into the air. At the crack of the guns, the frightened foreman of the lumber company fired into the mob. The strikers hurled stones and clubs and fired their own guns.

When the confusion and smoke cleared, the company foreman lay moaning on the dock, his face crushed by a stone. Police Officer Kingsley lay crumpled, blood from a stomach wound covering his hands. Officer Miller sat gripping a bullet wound in his right leg. One strike-breaker, found hiding in a shed, was sprawled on the wharf, close to death.

Leaving these docks littered with men, stones, and clubs, the mob marched up Main Street to Island Street. Crossing to Little Island, they put non-union workers there to flight, and then splashed on to another lumber company's docks where they chased out another work gang. By one o'clock their anger had cooled and, fearful of what had happened, they returned home.

How did the matter end?

Militia took over to end violence In the afternoon an uneasy stillness lay heavily upon the stunned village. But behind the scenes lumber owners were moving swiftly. At 1:30 they met at the Sheldon Hotel, donated \$1,000 to Kingsley's family, and ordered the sheriff to arrest the strike leaders. They also swore to unload the lumber and fight the union. At four o'clock the sheriff and his deputies arrested nine strikers and put them on the train for Lockport and the county jail.

Gradually the village recovered. Shock gave way to anger. Kingsley, hovering near death, was well liked by the community, and sober-minded citizens were frightened by the violence and bloodshed. Fearing more violence, they demanded that the sheriff protect the village.

On Sunday, June 12, the sheriff ordered out the 25th Separate Company of North Tonawanda and sent a call for the 42nd Company of Niagara Falls. There was a look of grim determination about the smartly dressed troops as they set up tents and began patrolling the docks. The workers gathered, again in an ugly mood, many of them armed. An uneasy truce settled on the village, as people waited for the next attempt to unload the lumber.

Monday and Tuesday were quiet. No move was made by lumber owners or workers. But the village waited for the battle between workers and soldiers. When the owners failed to find workers to unload the lumber, people breathed more easily. With the appearance of State Commissioner Donovan from Albany to settle the strike, hopes of avoiding bloodshed grew. Even the troops relaxed and began playing ball.

The strike was settled On Wednesday, June 15, Commissioner Donovan called both sides to a meeting at the Sheldon Hotel. Workers presented complaints. They demanded that lumber owners do away with stevedores, recognize their union, and raise wages to the levels of the surrounding areas. The lumber owners agreed to fire the stevedores and split their wages among the work gang, but they put off agreeing to recognize the union. That evening, the union accepted the lumber owners' offer. The strike was settled. The 42nd returned to Niagara Falls and the 25th disbanded. Peace once more settled upon North Tonawanda, and a grateful community gave public thanks to Commissioner Donovan as he left for Albany. And since Kingsley was recovering, the threat of jail for union leaders passed.

In July, people of North Tonawanda read with sympathy of the bloody Homestead steel strike in Pennsylvania and labor violence elsewhere in the nation. But gradually the coming campaign for President crowded labor violence from front pages. By the end of July, the Democrats had nominated Grover Cleveland of Buffalo for President. The Republicans re-nominated Benjamin Harrison, and the Populists, or "People's party" of workers and farmers, chose James B. Weaver of Iowa.

The election of 1892 goes to the Democrats

In Niagara County the chief election issue was the tariff, a tax on foreign goods entering the United States. Republican businessmen were afraid foreign goods would undersell their own. So they wanted a high tariff to raise the cost of incoming foreign goods. The Democrats, on the other hand, wanted a lower tariff to reduce the price of goods bought by workers and farmers.

The last week in October saw the candidates fire their final shots in the campaign. Democratic newspapers charged that the Republicans were interested only in the rich and did not care about the working people. Although Democrats whipped up a few rallies, sounded bugles, beat drums, and waved flags, their campaign was a calm one. Even the few insults they hurled at Republican leaders lacked enthusiasm.

The local Republican newspaper, the *Niagara Falls Gazette*, on the other hand, made an all out effort for high tariffs. Just before the November election, the *Gazette* made a direct appeal to workers to vote against Cleveland and lower tariff. The *Gazette* printed interviews with local business leaders. Businessmen said that the high tariff was the reason for the good times in Niagara Falls. They also pointed out that if cheap foreign goods flooded America, the workers in America would lose their jobs.

Victory-minded Republicans closed their campaign with a huge night parade. The parade was organized at the Park Theater where speakers whipped up crowds with fighting speeches. Finally the parade was ready, but the marchers had to wait an hour for the Lockport group. While they waited, the rain that had begun in the afternoon turned into a steady downpour. At last the rain-soaked Lockport Republicans arrived. Then the paraders slogged through rain-darkened streets, their torches drowned out, and their faces, necks, and clothing drenched by the cold, driving rain.

Election day dawned clear and chilly and voters straggled through puddles to voting centers. Republicans gathered in confident groups, sure of victory. But when the votes were counted, Grover Cleveland and the Democrats had swept the whole county. Stunned Republicans received the news in staring disbelief.

Republicans win the heated election of 1896

Grover Cleveland had not been long in office before the Panic of 1893 gripped the nation. The Panic, however, made only a passing swipe at Niagara County. North Tonawanda was again the scene of labor trouble. In spite of agreements the year before, lumber owners kept the stevedore system and refused to recognize the Lumber Shovers' Union. And this time lumber owners brought in Polish immigrants from Buffalo and broke the strike. But no violence erupted; workers held out until hunger and debts drove them back to the lumber docks.

What were the results of the Panic of 1893?

The Panic of 1893 had far-reaching political results, even in Niagara County, which was not hard hit. Elsewhere in the nation, workers and farmers without jobs or farms blamed their hard times upon eastern business and banking firms. In bitter hate, they joined the Populist party. They planned to win the 1896 election and change the value of money to make it easier for people to pay debts. This would smash the stranglehold business had upon them. Businessmen feared a change in the value of money and fought the

Populist party. So the coming election of 1896 loomed as a do or die struggle between labor and business. Niagara County also took part in this struggle.

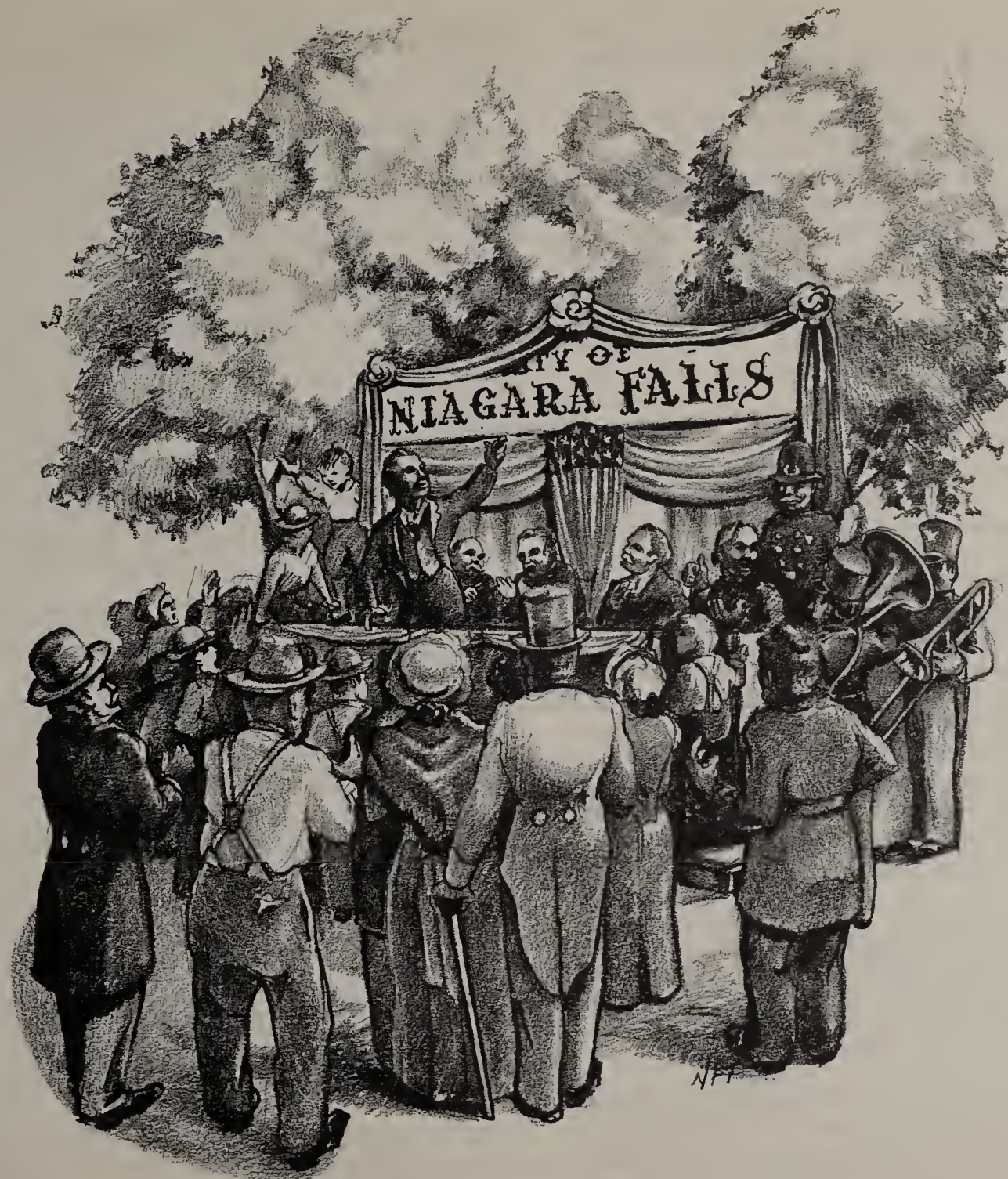
The campaign for the Presidency opened in the summer of 1896. Republicans chose William McKinley, the dignified Governor of Ohio, as their candidate. The Populists sided with the Democrats, who gathered at Chicago to name their candidates. At the convention, a young man from Nebraska stepped to the speaker's platform. After his thunderous speech attacking money values which favored eastern business, the frenzied crowd chanted "Bryan! Bryan! Bryan!". And the Democrats and later the Populists nominated William Jennings Bryan to lead the crusade for cheaper money.

What tactics did the Republicans use to win?

Big business poured money into McKinley's campaign The following campaign was one of the most hysterical in the history of Niagara County or the nation. Church, government, and industry, in Niagara County and throughout the nation, looked upon Bryan as a man bent on destroying American liberties. Fearful of Bryan's election, they threw their wealth and power into the struggle. Many businessmen in Niagara County gave heavily to the sixteen million dollars spent for McKinley's campaign. They also supported the 18,000 speakers sent throughout the nation.

Against this mighty flood, Bryan stood practically alone. He had less than three hundred thousand dollars for campaign expenses. And he was forced to make ten to twenty speeches a day on his personal campaign. Bryan got little support in Niagara County and the East. His main support came from work-worn prairie farmers. But what they lacked in numbers they made up for in emotion. At their political rallies they sang hymns and whispered prayers for Bryan. They pictured him standing bravely against the raging flood of eastern power and wealth. Their rallies usually ended with the chant "Bryan! Bryan! Bryan!".

Many newspapers and factory owners supported McKinley But their cries did not reach the city strongholds of big business. In Niagara County, and throughout the East, people supported McKinley. In Buffalo, 30,000 people paraded against Bryan and the "popocrats," as his followers were called. Worried about Bryan's election, business leaders, doctors, lawyers, and other professional men marched for the cause of McKinley. In Niagara Falls and Lockport, newspapers joined the ranks of McKinley's supporters. They covered front pages with



In March of 1892 the villages of Niagara Falls and Suspension Bridge became the City of Niagara Falls.

appeals to workers. Some mill and factory owners in Niagara Falls threatened their men with the loss of their jobs unless they voted for McKinley.

Five days before the election, Republicans staged a giant torchlight parade in Niagara Falls. In the chill October night, they organized at the Main Street armory. Matches sputtered, torches flared, drums and bugles sounded, and the parade moved through the city, headed by the 42nd Separate Company.

Although some community leaders feared that destruction hung by a thread over their heads, the parading workers seemed less worried about Bryan. And while marching for the cause of industry, they shouted:

Riff, raff, ruff! Riff, raff, ruff!
McKinley, McKinley: he's hot stuff.

But there was a violent note to the parade. Several of the few popocrats in Niagara County hurled stones at the McKinley men. They sent one to the hospital and injured others. Except for this, the community considered the parade a great success, and looked upon it with pride. By the time election day rolled around, Niagara County was at a feverish pitch of excitement.

When election day dawned fair and mild in November, voters flocked to voting centers. The Niagara Falls *Gazette* office, and other places throughout the county, had doors wide open so citizens could follow the election returns. As voting results streamed in, noisy crowds milled about news centers. By early evening, returns showed Niagara County had gone overwhelmingly for McKinley. People paraded happily through the streets carrying torches and shouting and cheering. As the hour grew later, taverns and saloons did a roaring business. Crowds marched city streets until dawn turned the eastern sky gray. Then the tired merrymakers gradually made their way home to bed.

The day after the election, newspapers carried headlines: "McKinley and Prosperity; The Country is Saved." Reporters, to find out how the people felt, quizzed business leaders on election results. Businessman after businessman heaved a sigh of relief at McKinley's election.

Gradually the excitement died down and Niagara County turned to the task of industrial growth. To businessmen, the election was overwhelming public approval of big business. Even North Tonawanda seemed to recover with the news of McKinley's election, and factories there started hiring more men.

Tragedy mars the Pan-American Exposition

How did the exposition excite Niagara County?

Rumors and war set the stage

The wild election of 1896 passed into history and new excitement caught hold of Niagara County. Rumors of a gigantic exposition filled the air. Nations of North and South America were to take part. Each nation planned a building to show its life and products. Special buildings of art, music, and science would also be part of the exposition. The central attraction would be a tower of lights using electricity from Niagara Falls. But when and where the exposition would be held remained unsettled.

In June, 1897, the Pan-American Exposition Company was formed in Buffalo. After searching widely for a place to hold the exposition, the company finally decided upon Cayuga Island in what is now Niagara Falls. As a fitting honor for such a great undertaking, President McKinley hammered the first stake in a brief ceremony on August 26. Before the company could swing into construction, however, the Spanish-American War erupted and construction was delayed.

The site was changed

When the company finally started building in 1899, the exposition site was changed to Buffalo, north of Delaware Park. For two years stone masons, carpenters, painters, and laborers worked at the site. They cleared trees and constructed roads, bridges, buildings, lakes, and even an emergency hospital. Slowly the Pan-American Exposition arose from old woodlands. Magnificent stone and marble buildings with graceful gardens covered acres. Buildings of stucco with red tile roofs added a Spanish flavor to the exposition. Elaborate bridges crossed streams and man-made lakes, and the tower of lights reached far into the sky. By spring 1901, everything was ready.

In May, 1901, the exposition opened with band music, speeches, and hundreds of flags floating on the wind. Diplomats from many nations, governors, exposition officials, and community leaders attended the opening. Amid the splendor of the exposition, they freely congratulated each other. After the opening ceremonies, crowds moved about the grounds, wandering through buildings, pointing, touching, staring, and spending money.

In the months that followed, many from Niagara County flocked to the exposition, especially at night, to see the breath-taking tower of lights. Gay crowds from Lockport boarded special trains to the exposition. Four trains from Niagara Falls made a daily round trip

to the fair grounds. For many months, the exposition was the main topic wherever people gathered.

How did President McKinley's visit end in tragedy?

Minor mishaps greeted the President's first days

The high point of the exposition came with President McKinley's visit in September. In spite of wildly happy crowds, an air of tragedy surrounded the President. Days before his arrival, agents guarding his life swung down from the train in Buffalo. With the aid of Buffalo police and a company of army regulars, they planned for the safety of the President.

But with all their planning, McKinley narrowly escaped serious injury on his arrival. On Wednesday, September 4, the President's train rolled into the station as cannons by the tracks boomed a twenty-one gun salute. But the cannons were too close to the train. Waiting crowds watched in horror as the pressure from the explosions shattered train windows and sent glass flying into the President's car. The sight of McKinley and his wife stepping from the train unharmed brought cheers from the crowds. Along the way to his rooms at the John Milburn house, McKinley smiled and waved to the people. The following day the President was busy at the exposition. He spent the morning and afternoon reviewing troops, giving speeches, and shaking an endless number of hands. In the evening McKinley and his wife stood in wonder before the tower of lights that brightened the sky.

On Friday, September 6, the President's program called for a visit to Lewiston and Niagara Falls. McKinley and his party left aboard the "Presidential Special." Railroad officials halted all other trains. As a further precaution, switchmen were on special duty along the way to see that the Presidential train reached Lewiston safely. In Lewiston, as the President was leaving the train and greeting officials, secret agents sifted through the crowds. Then McKinley strolled to the old Gorge Line trolley for a trip along the lower rapids to Niagara Falls. The President's party, in an observation car, sped along the edge of the churning rapids. The trolley slowed as it passed the flag-draped Devil's Hole and Whirlpool stations, and McKinley waved to the waiting crowds.

At 11:15 the trolley crawled out of the gorge at Niagara Falls. The waiting crowds burst into a roar when the President climbed into the first of a long line of carriages. Drawn by white horses, the President's carriage moved between lines of cheering people on the way to the Falls. The only tense moment came when the horse

of one of the military escorts slipped and fell upon him. At the Falls, the President's carriage clattered out onto the bridge to Canada to give him a better view of the tumbling water. Returning from the bridge, they drove to the garden entrance of the well-guarded International Hotel. Mrs. McKinley, tired and worn from the hot sun, went inside, but the President toured Goat Island.

The party returned to the International Hotel for a cold lunch. In the ballroom, the President and his party sat down at rose-decorated tables set with elaborate china. They chatted pleasantly and listened to music as the white-gloved hands of waiters flickered about the tables, serving broiled softshell crabs and Philadelphia squab. The only disturbance was an attempt by a mild-looking young man to enter the hotel without a pass. The President knew nothing of this, nor did the police think it important until later.

At 2:00 P.M. members of the President's party inspected the Niagara Falls Power Company. After seeing his wife on the train for Buffalo, McKinley joined them. At the power house, agents allowed no one to pass into the building until the President had left. At 2:50 he boarded the train for the Pan-American Exposition. As the train rolled along, President McKinley heard the rhythmic click of train wheels for the last time.

McKinley was shot At the exposition, he strode rapidly through the hot sun into the magnificent Temple of Music. The door closed behind him, drowning out the roaring crowd. Soft organ music filled the hall where McKinley was to shake hands with the public. In the Temple, uneasy secret agents and detectives, made a last minute check. In such public appearances, the President faced the greatest danger of assassination.

At four o'clock the doors swung open and hot, sweating people filed in. Handkerchiefs blinked in the cool temple as people mopped brows. Agents and detectives studied every person as the line crawled slowly toward the President. For six or seven minutes, a smiling McKinley shook hands with people as they shuffled by. Then the guards pushed the doors shut, against the pressing mass waiting to see the President.

Toward the end of the line a slender young man, holding a handkerchief, stepped forward to greet the President. McKinley smiled into his pleasant blue eyes and extended his right hand. Leon Czolgosz reached forward with the hand holding the handkerchief.

Two shots shattered the soft organ music. President McKinley staggered back, shot twice in the body. Detectives pounced upon Czolgosz, dragging him to the floor, while others helped McKinley to a chair. After a quick check of the wounds, guards carried Mc-

Kinley through a stunned crowd to the exposition hospital. The hospital was part of the exposition because Dr. Roswell Park had foreseen accidents with so many people swarming about. Dr. Park was a world famous surgeon and exposition officials had taken his advice.

At that instant, twenty miles away, Dr. Park worked upon the unconscious form of William Powley in Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital. His skilful hands tied off blood vessels, released clamps, and put in stitches. Meanwhile, in Buffalo the President's blood flowed unchecked, his internal organs torn by the bullets. Dr. Park knew nothing of this until a telegram halted the operation for a moment. He finished the operation while his assistant made ready a special train. At 5:46 he was aboard, racing to the wounded President.

As Dr. Park's train sped toward Buffalo, the emergency hospital was a scene of tense drama. Drs. Matthew Mann and Herman Mynster faced the responsibility of saving the President's life. After a brief discussion they decided to operate rather than to wait for Dr. Park.

They moved swiftly. In minutes McKinley was inhaling ether and drifting into unconsciousness. For a moment Dr. Mann held his scalpel above the still form of the President. Then he made the first cut. Sponging away the blood, he clamped off blood vessels and worked into the abdominal cavity. Then they examined the damage done by the bullets. One bullet had glanced off, doing little harm. The second had entered the left side, tearing through the stomach. Further examination showed no more damage, but the doctors could not find the bullet. The President was weakening fast and they dared not continue searching for the bullet. They repaired the stomach, washed the abdominal cavity, and closed the wound.

**The operation
seemed successful**

When Dr. Park arrived, the operation was nearly completed. Had he been operating, he might have found the hole through the large intestine and the damaged kidney. But the operation seemed successful, as far as he could tell. The President's pulse, temperature, and respiration were not alarming. Later, Dr. Park and Dr. Charles McBurney, an abdominal specialist, signed the daily bulletins issued from the Milburn house where the President lay. And while unseen fluids seeped into the abdominal cavity, newspapers gave out encouraging reports about the President's recovery.

When the September 11 report on the President was issued, the nation took hope. Newspapers reported that a blood count failed to show any signs of poisoning. The President was taking nourish-

ment and was on the road to recovery. Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt, McKinley's friends, Mark Hanna and Robert Lincoln, relatives, and others who had gathered at his side left Buffalo. Even Dr. McBurney took two days off to relax at Niagara Falls.

**Death came to
McKinley in the
early morning**

On the evening of September 13, the final act took place. The internal damages caught up with McKinley. He took a fateful turn for the worse, and at 2:15 A.M. on September 14, he died. An examination revealed the full extent of the bullet's damage and the blood poisoning in the wound.

Officials in the nation again streamed toward Buffalo. A special train picked up Roosevelt from a hunting trip in the Adirondack Mountains, and the Cabinet came quickly from Washington, D. C. to meet him. A solemn group watched the heavily guarded Theodore Roosevelt sworn in as President of the United States. And for a time, Buffalo was the capital of the nation.

Stunned people of Niagara County went sadly to Buffalo to take their last look at McKinley. Cities and villages throughout the nation went into mourning. For days newspapers were edged in black, while flags were flown at half-staff. In Niagara Falls, community leaders called a special gathering to honor McKinley and vote to erect a statue in his honor.

While the nation mourned, police kept Leon Czolgosz's whereabouts secret, until his trial at Auburn, New York. At the exposition, a mob had battered down police guards and nearly lynched him, and the police wanted to avoid more trouble. Czolgosz was calm throughout the storm raging about him. At his trial, his only explanation for his act was, "I killed the President because he was an enemy of the good people, the working people. I am not sorry for my crime."

Czolgosz was an anarchist and therefore believed all government and leaders were the people's enemies. He went calmly to the electric chair, sure in his own mind that he had done his duty. And so he died, refusing to see a priest, and without regrets.

11. Niagara County and the nation face problems together

The final step in the political development of Niagara County is its growing concern with national and world problems. In the years since 1900, it had been taking a bigger part in national events.

Modern transportation and communication have bound it closely to the nation and world. So that by the 1960's, the world problems faced by the nation were also faced by Niagara County. More and more, world problems have concerned the people of this outpost of empires. This chapter, then, shows Niagara County's activity in national and world events.

The Twentieth Century opened with an attack on the evils in American life. Then World War I came, and the nation forgot about improving American life and turned to the task of winning the war. After the war came the years from 1921 to 1929, the "Roaring Twenties," a period of boom and glitter. In the next ten years, the dull gloom of the depression hung over Niagara County and the nation. The depression Thirties came to an end when World War II broke out. The year 1945 brought peace, but it also brought the problem of changing from wartime to peacetime living. There was a great shortage of housing, automobiles, washing machines, and many other things. Finally, the 1950's and 1960's have seen the Cold War, the Korean War, business growth, and a recession, and of course, the problem of world leadership.

Reform and War fill the first twenty years of the 20th century

How did the people come to get "a square deal"?

Muckrakers worked for reform With the great growth of the United States after the Civil War, came many problems.

But the nation was so busy growing that it had little time for them. So problems remained unsolved and forgotten until 1900. By then, these evils had become so great that they could no longer be overlooked. The first people to attack these problems were a rising group of young writers called "muckrakers." They attacked the underhanded methods of big business, the dishonest politicians, and the miserable poverty in the midst of plenty. Others supported the "muckrakers" and a movement for change, known as a reform movement, was started.

Theodore Roosevelt became a reform President The first reform president was Theodore Roosevelt. After McKinley's death, he took over leadership of the nation and promised to carry out McKinley's plans. But he had

ideas of his own, and soon he drifted away from McKinley's ideas. The first target Roosevelt picked out for reform was big business.

Following the Civil War, big business became an unchained

giant. In a form of business organization called a "trust," big business gobbled up smaller businesses and trampled competition. Beginning with John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company of Ohio, trusts spread to the whiskey, sugar, beef, and steel industries. Each of these trusts was trying to get complete control over the kinds of goods and services it sold to the public.

Roosevelt felt the nation would suffer if big business controlled all the things people needed. Big business trusts could then charge whatever prices they wished because they had no competition. The public either paid high prices or went without goods. Trusts also pressured state legislators into passing laws that helped them. And they put pressure on national and local officials to do as business wanted.

President Roosevelt struck hard at the trusts. He and the muckrakers aroused the public to the dangers of trusts. In 1904, when running for re-election, Roosevelt pointed proudly to his record as a "trust buster." In fact, the public was so angry that any candidate could win votes by attacking business trusts. In 1906 the widespread fear of trusts elected a Niagara County Congressman.

How was Niagara's "Good Old Cow Campaign" connected with reform?

For twenty years the Congressional district which included Niagara County elected Republican James Wadsworth to Congress. He was so certain of re-election that he lived in Washington, D. C. and returned to the Niagara area only to accept nomination for office. With the Republicans regularly casting over 8,000 more votes than the Democrats, this nomination really meant election.

In 1906, however, a Niagara Falls Democratic leader, Edward T. Williams, thought that the time was ripe to win the election from the Republicans. Public anger over the horribly filthy conditions in the meat packing business had been making newspaper headlines. And Wadsworth's name was linked with the meat-packing trust.

Williams approached a member of an important family in the district, Peter A. Porter, Jr., an independent Republican. The thought of running for public office, especially against the ever-victorious Wadsworth, amused Porter. After giving the idea more thought, however, he agreed to run. Williams then convinced the Democrats that they should nominate Porter, a Republican, to run for office.

The point of attack in the following campaign was Wadsworth's connection with the meat-packing trust. Democrats said he was a servant of the meat packing trust, and that his Meat Inspection

Act was written by meat-packers. To keep the beef trust before the voters, Williams came up with the symbol of a cow. Whenever Democrats met, they passed around pictures of a cow. And so the "Good Old Cow" campaign was born.

In the final election rally at the Niagara Falls International Hotel, Williams read a poem about a cow. Porter followed his lead with a humorous but slashing attack upon the meat-packers. The voters roared with laughter—and accepted Porter's views. With fair weather on election day, large numbers went to the polls to vote. When the votes were counted, Porter had overcome the usual 8,000 Republican majority and won by 4,000 votes.

In spite of this victory, Porter's term in Washington was not very successful. The Democrats mistrusted him as a turncoat Republican, and Wadsworth's friends in the Republican party opposed all his actions. The next election saw Wadsworth and the Republican Big Four working hard to get Republican votes, and Porter was defeated for re-election.

Why were the campaigns of 1908 and 1912 dull?

After the Good Old Cow Campaign politics lost some of its color. The election for president in 1908 saw Roosevelt's handpicked Republican candidate, William Howard Taft, win the election.

The campaign of 1912 was more exciting, but events in Europe and troubles with Mexico crowded it off the front pages of local newspapers. Roosevelt lost the Republican nomination to Taft, so he ran on the Progressive, or Bull Moose, ticket. Excitement rose sharply in Niagara County when Roosevelt was wounded by an assassin's bullet in Milwaukee. But it dropped quickly when he got back into the fight. The Republicans split their votes between Taft and Roosevelt, and so Democrat Woodrow Wilson became President.

How did the United States and Niagara become involved in World War?

Submarine warfare resulted in loss of American life Two years after Wilson's election, war broke out in Europe. America tried hard to steer clear of the war. Wilson urged the American people to keep out of it. But the success of German armies in Belgium and France made this hard to do. Besides, the Germans were using a frightening war weapon, the submarine. Striking without warning, it left helpless passengers on torpedoed ships to die.

When President Wilson protested the ship sinkings to Germany, Niagara County applauded. But Americans refused to heed his warning to stay off ships bound for the war zone. On May 1, 1915, the Niagara Falls *Gazette* carried a public notice from the German Embassy. All Americans were warned to stay off the *Lusitania*, sailing from New York for England. Six days later the ship was sunk. Three citizens from Niagara Falls were included among the victims of this attack.

Niagara County and the nation flared up in anger over the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Again President Wilson demanded that Germans stop sinking unarmed merchant ships. For a time they did so, but the war in Europe was not going too well for the Germans. They felt that the submarine could turn the tide in their favor. Submarine sinkings again made the headlines. Then German spies began to damage American factories making war goods for England and her allies. Soon people were willing to believe that all accidents were caused by the Germans. In Niagara Falls an explosion in a chemical plant had everyone wondering if it were the work of German spies.

The Zimmerman note was another cause

More and more, Germany's actions in the war caused new anti-German feeling. America felt war with Germany was coming and the Zimmerman note helped bring it closer. This note promised Mexico the return of her former territory, now part of the United States, if she would declare war on the United States. Wilson could no longer keep the American people from demanding war. In April, 1917, he asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany and the Central Powers.

Niagara supported the war

Niagara County was quick to answer the call to arms. The day after the war started, the local Naval Militia was headed for duty. A few weeks later, thousands turned out in a steady drizzle to see Company E, 3rd New York Infantry, off to war.

With America in the war, people's feelings against Germany spread to many Americans of German ancestry who lived in the county. Many of them lost their jobs in war work and were sent to work on farms. German storekeepers in the county got threatening letters, and their store windows were broken. German neighborhoods were broken up and neighbors scattered for fear of anti-American activity.

The Niagara County Home Defense Committee made a careful check on all aliens. In April, the County Sheriff printed a letter in

the local papers urging fearful German-Americans to say nothing, to move into non-German neighborhoods, and to be loyal to the United States.

Anti-Germanism spread to the schools. Niagara Falls High School and other county schools stopped teaching the German language. German-Americans tried to prove their loyalty to the United States by charging one another with having anti-American feelings. All this did was to increase the rising hate against Germans. As President Wilson had warned, a nation at war forgets its usual tolerance.

The home front mobilized

Niagara County, with the rest of the nation, turned to the task of winning the war.

Slowly at first, and then faster, the factories in the Niagara area began to clang with the production of war goods. Whole communities swung into the war effort. The Red Cross organized chapters in schools, churches, and social clubs. Some school boards appointed a "garden teacher" for every hundred pupils, to teach them how to grow food for victory. Citizens supported meatless, wheatless, and sugarless days and they went without fuel and electricity to save goods needed to win the war. Liberty Bond drives to help pay for the war were always successful in the County.

Men from Niagara fought in France

While the home front was working for victory, men from Niagara County fought the enemy in Europe. At first they fought with

English and French units, but later all Americans fought under General John J. Pershing, as the American Expeditionary Force. The summer of 1918 saw new names in the *Gazette* and other newspapers in the county. Such names as Chateau-Thierry, St. Mihiel, Belleau Wood, and the Argonne Forest were written in blood in American war history. The Germans were slowly pushed back. Finally they surrendered in November, 1918. The date of the Armistice, now known as Veteran's Day, has been a national holiday ever since.

In 1918 crowded troopships began to arrive home from Europe. In Niagara Falls, Mayor Whitehead proclaimed a civic holiday. People celebrated Thanksgiving early that year, and churches were crowded with those giving thanks. But danger lurked in the background. Against orders of the Board of Health, people crowded the railroad station to greet the returning troops. The closeness of the crowds helped spread deadly influenza germs. Like the cholera plagues of 1832 and 1854, the "flu" epidemic took its toll. Over ten thousand in the county fell ill with the plague, and about one thou-

sand died, including 360 in Niagara Falls alone.

Unlike the earlier plagues, however, this one was met head on. Public school teachers and nearby Niagara University students volunteered to aid the sick. The Elk's Temple was used to relieve the overcrowded conditions in Niagara Falls hospitals. By the spring of 1919, these heroic efforts had won and the epidemic passed.

A wild decade leaves its mark

Americans had faced war and won. They had faced a serious epidemic and won. Perhaps they were tired of facing things. At any rate they refused to face world leadership, and turned down the whole idea of the world league for peace that President Wilson wanted. This was clear when Niagara County voted with the nation and elected Warren G. Harding as President in the first election after the war, in 1920.

Forgetting Europe and the world and the problems that went with them, America turned to itself. Americans gave themselves over to pleasure and good times for ten years. This period of the 1920's is known as the Jazz Age, or more often as the "Roaring Twenties."

How did the period earn the name "Roaring Twenties"?

People evaded

The Eighteenth Amendment had been passed

Prohibition laws

in the last days of 1918. This law made the production and sale of liquor illegal. The

evening before it was to go into effect, the people gave "demon rum" a roaring goodbye. Liquor stores in Niagara County did a gay last-minute rush business. But the goodbye did not last long. Soon illegal liquors were available in "speakeasies." Many people winked slyly and boasted of their private liquor supplier as they might of their doctor or lawyer.

Being close to Canada, Niagara County played its part in the illegal liquor traffic. Under the cover of night, from a dozen lonely points in Canada, high speed motorboats loaded with liquor roared toward the United States. The people who received the liquor were called bootleggers. Greatly out-numbered and over-worked government agents tried to stop this traffic. But the market for liquor was too great, and the profit too high. So liquor continued to cross the border. In time rival gangs took a hand in the traffic. Crime waves and gangster rule threatened communities.

National scandals came to light

The traffic in illegal alcohol was not the only wrong taking place in America. During Harding's terms as president, Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall was convicted of illegally selling naval oil reserves. The head of the Veteran's Bureau was charged with several crimes. Colonel Thomas W. Miller, Custodian of Alien Property, was charged with selling German chemical patents illegally. But unlike earlier scandals under President Grant, few people seemed to get excited about them.

The Twenties were also a period of industrial growth. Many new industries appeared that changed people's lives. Automobiles became common and the radio had taken hold. Jazz music was becoming widespread. Movies became popular and movie actors and actresses took the place of older national heroes in the minds of many young people. These things made a new kind of life for Americans.

People seemed happy with things as they were. The old reform movement of pre-war days was unpopular. But it was not dead. Eugene V. Debs polled a million votes in 1920, and in 1924 the Conference for Progressive Political Action was formed. In 1927 the Socialist candidate for mayor of Niagara Falls, Albert Young, received over 1700 votes.

But most people feared change. In eastern Europe, the Communists had taken over Russia. In Germany and Hungary as well, Communists were strong. A wave of anti-Communism swept Niagara County and the nation. Self-styled undercover agents charged neighbors with being "Reds." Niagara County too had people who made false charges against their neighbors. In 1920 the New York State legislature refused to seat five Socialists who had been elected. Aliens who were suspected of being Communists were deported. In time the hysteria ran its course, as it usually does, but not until the liberties of some American citizens had been damaged.

Business boomed All of these things were part of the Twenties. But what marked the period even more was the tremendous growth of industry. Nowhere in the nation was this better shown than in Niagara Falls. Population jumped from 50,700 in 1920 to 75,000 by 1930.

Growth in population caused changes in the city. New parks were built—Hyde Park, Wright Park, La Salle Park, and Whirlpool Park. A new city hall, a municipal airport, and Rapids Boulevard and other roads for the ever-increasing autos marked the progress from a small to a large city. Several more schools were opened, including Niagara Falls High School, and North and South

Junior High Schools. And as a tribute to the importance of business and industry, Trott Vocational High School was built and named for James F. Trott, a tireless worker for better education for over thirty years.

During these same years, private business erected three impressive buildings in the city, the Niagara Hotel, the Niagara Falls Trust Company, and the United Office Building. Industry matched this with widespread plant expansion.

Signs of economic troubles showed through prosperity

In Niagara County as well as in the rest of the United States, the Twenties seemed like a new period of endless prosperity. But for those who cared to see, there were signs that all was not well. The price of farm products had been low ever since the war ended. By the mid-Twenties farmers were having a difficult time meeting mortgage payments.

A large part of the magic of this period was the spread of an old device called credit. People had bought farms and homes on time payments for a long time. But during this period, the American people were talked into installment-buying for many more things. The lure of having things you wanted now, and paying for them later, was a great temptation. So people bought autos, washing machines, radios, and vacuum cleaners. All of these items were practically new to many who had not been able to save up enough money to pay for them before.

The economy collapsed

This buying on credit of things people could not afford came to a sudden end in October, 1929. While business leaders from Niagara Falls gathered at the Skyline Dinner in the ballroom of the Niagara Hotel to honor business, the business world was about to come crashing down. The topic of conversation among people in the city had little to do with the coming business crash. They were excited about the coming Festival of Lights. It turned out to be the last of the famous parades, the last blaze of a dying prosperity.

Thirty years of depression, war, and unrest come to America

How did Niagara County and the nation deal with the depression?

Depression paralyzed the nation With the collapse of the stock market in October of 1929, the wheels of industry gradually slowed down. At Pittsburgh, De-

troit, Buffalo, and Niagara Falls, factory smokestacks reached empty into the sky. "No Help Wanted" signs hung from the front gates of silent factories. Incomes began to drop. And as they did, people had to give up the things they had bought on the magical installment plan. The depression grew deeper. Banks failed and many people saw their savings lost in the business crisis.

People unable to meet mortgage payments were forced from their homes onto the streets. Small villages grew up in the city dumps on the edges of cities. Shacks made from old wood, flattened tin, and cardboard arose from the trash heaps.

Niagara fought back The depression continued to grind its way over helpless millions. Cities and states tried to relieve some of the suffering. The \$250,000 that the state gave the City of Niagara Falls in 1932 dropped into a bottomless pit of need. Everywhere social agencies increased their appeals for funds to ease the plight of the poor.

In the crisp November of 1932, the Rotary Community Clothing Bureau made direct appeals in the *Gazette* for shoes and blankets. Walter Grieg, Bureau official, told of people plodding through freezing slush without soles on their shoes, of ragged men, women, and children without adequate clothing against the cold. Rotary Club members repaired shoes and clothing donated by the public and gave them to needy families. But this help was not nearly enough to end the widespread hunger and misery in the county.

As the depression tightened its grip, local governments felt the pinch. During the Roaring Twenties they had spent money freely on schools, roads, and buildings. Heavily in debt and unable to collect taxes, local governments were unable to meet payrolls or give adequate services. Salaries of city employees were cut. School operating costs in Niagara Falls were cut twenty-five percent. All but the barest necessities of city government were cut to the bone. But the Advisory Welfare Committee was able to report that the city was in better shape than many others.

In Lockport, North Tonawanda, and elsewhere in the county it was the same story. The Niagara County Economic Council carefully checked county budgets to see if salaries, services, and other expenses could be cut in some way. Because of these steps, the county was able to avoid financial disaster. In a time when many areas of the nation were failing, this was an accomplishment.

The nation turned hopefully to F.D.R. Amid the misery and hunger of 1932, the election for president took place. The Democrats chose Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor of New York, to run against Republican Herbert Hoover. Hoover

promised that prosperity was "just around the corner." But the voters blamed him and his party for the depression. When the votes were counted, Franklin Roosevelt was elected.

The Federal Government joined the fight The new president, telling the people "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," plunged right into the task of getting the nation back on its feet. His chief weapon against the depression was the wealth and power of the United States Government. Under the president's urging, Congress quickly passed an Emergency Relief bill to take care of those without food, clothing, and a place to live.

Then a series of "alphabet" organizations began to roll out of Washington to help the nation. The "C. C. C.," the Civilian Conservation Corps, put many young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five to work at the task of saving our resources. Public parks in the county and state were built by these youths. The Works Progress Administration, better known as the W. P. A., and the Public Works Administration, the P. W. A., put more men to work in the county. The Civil Works Administration, C. W. A., gave money so that the night school program of Niagara Falls could open again in 1933.

The nation repealed the Prohibition Law In December of 1933, the prohibition experiment was ended by repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. The Niagara Falls *Gazette* published a list of sixteen places where liquor was for sale. A carnival atmosphere filled the liquor centers as gay crowds swarmed about waiting to buy. Back came the five-cent glass of beer. But after the excitement passed, the depression was still there to be faced.

World War II ended the depression Gradually some sort of order emerged from the pieces left by the crash of 1929. By 1936, the worst of the depression had passed, although there was a sharp falling off in business again in 1937. The outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 started factories in Niagara County and elsewhere humming again. The evil of depression had been replaced by the evil of war.

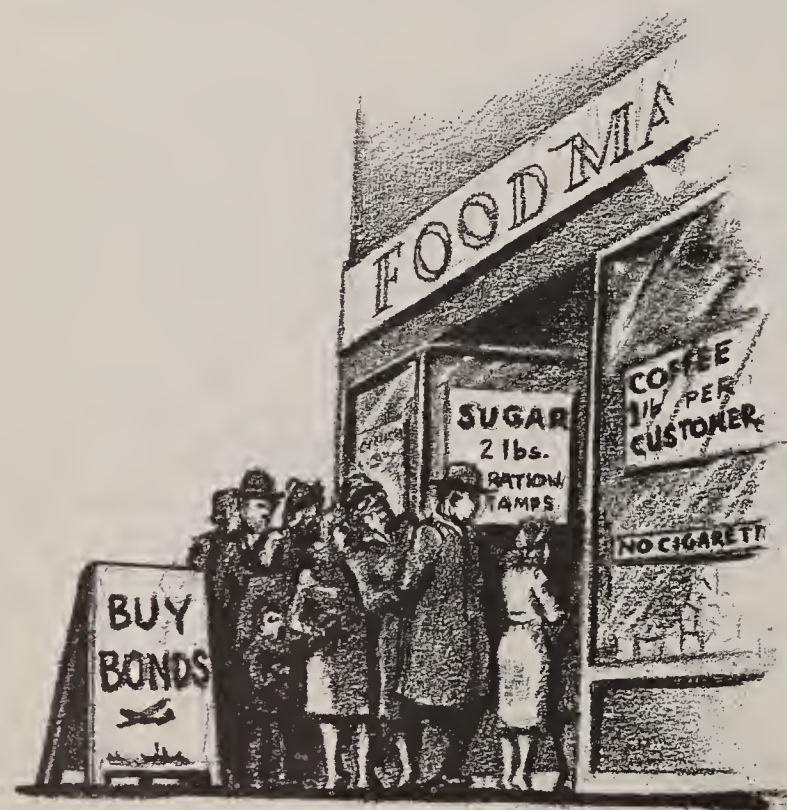
How did America enter World War II?

Hitler rose to power in Germany When the world bogged down in the depression of the Thirties, Germany, the defeated nation of World War I, was left to shift for herself. Rising from the bitterness, confusion, and hate of defeat, Adolph Hitler promised a new Germany. Telling the Ger-

mans they were a superior people, Hitler began arming the nation for a new struggle.

Before a disorganized and wishful world, Hitler and his Nazi party began their moves. The arming of Germany was the first step in breaking the Versailles peace treaty that had ended World War I. His next step was to occupy the Saar region. Following this, Hitler made an alliance with Italy, and took Czechoslovakia and Austria. The western nations hoped that Hitler would now be satisfied. But in September of 1939, Hitler ordered an invasion of Poland and World War II was under way.

As in World War I, America tried to steer clear of war. But gradually the situation between 1914 and 1917 was repeated, and the United States was drawn into war. The nation shipped war goods to the Allies. Later we sent destroyers to England, who desperately needed these small, fast warships. Eventually United States warships, in protecting Allied cargo-ships, began sinking German submarines. The nation was moving closer to war.

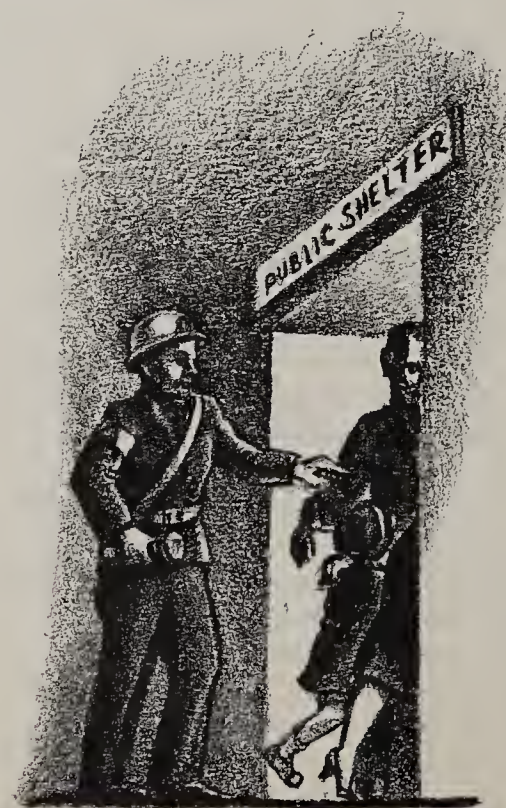


During World War II, some merchandise was scarce.

In 1940, President Roosevelt asked Congress for money to start a defense program, and for a law to draft all men twenty-one years old into the army. The slowly awakening giant of American industry began to move. But the blow that sent Niagara County men to war came not from Europe, but from the Far East.

All through the Thirties, industrializing Japan had grown bolder and bolder. Invading the mainland of China, she had taken Manchuria and then struck at China. Realizing that the United States did not approve of her expansion in the Far East, Japan planned an attack on Hawaii.

On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes swooped down on the sleepy base of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The base was left a shambles with the greater part of the proud American fleet sunk in the harbor. The Japanese attacked other American Pacific bases. They took the Philippines along with the small Pacific islands of Wake, Guam, and others.



Niagara County again prepared to fight The day after Pearl Harbor, Niagara County was an armed camp. Civilian and military forces set up machine guns at all vital points. Fearful of the sabotage of World War I, the sheriff's deputies put twenty-four hour patrols at the airport, water works, and radio station in Niagara Falls. All civilians received warnings to stay clear of these places after sunset. Within weeks, high fences and gun platforms guarded important chemical plants in Niagara Falls. United States agents made a careful check on Japanese aliens. Some were sent to prison camps, as some Germans were in World War I.

The federal government had made its presence felt during the depression. Now it spread its authority even further. Employment, food, transportation, and production, were under the eye of the national government. Like the nation, Niagara County again underwent rationing of shoes, meat, clothing, food, oil, and many other goods. People had to line up to get their ration cards. Blue stamps, red stamps, and gasoline stickers became a part of daily life.

The Axis Powers surrendered

For two years before entering the war, the United States sent goods to the Allies. Now it was sending its young men and women. The story of Allied victory over the Axis Powers, Germany, Japan, and Italy, is a tale for other pages than those in this book. In the far-flung battlefields of Europe and the Pacific, the Allies slowly fought to victory. Moving from one battle to another, in Africa, in France, and in the heart of Germany, the Allies won out in May of 1945. Japan held on until August. Then, under the terrible destruction of the atomic bomb, Japan surrendered.

One of the great casualties of the war was President Roosevelt himself. Worn by the cares of office, he died in April, 1945, just before Germany's surrender.

Niagara Falls received the surrender news joyously

President Truman announced the surrender at seven o'clock on August 14, 1945. Seconds after the news was broadcast, church bells, horns, and whistles shattered the quiet summer evening. Drawn by their common joy, the people of Ni-



Factories making war supplies were carefully guarded.

agara Falls poured into the downtown areas. So many crammed aboard buses that the drivers gave up trying to collect fares. Crowds poured off the sidewalks into the streets, bringing traffic to a halt. People hugged each other, crying "The war's over." Again and again they shouted these words as if trying to make sure it was true. Some people stood quietly in doorways watching their neighbors celebrate. Others knelt in churches saying prayers of thanks for the war's end.

A period of adjustment followed the war

The war would not really be over for the families with men overseas until their men came marching home. Families learned then about the point system. This provided that the men with longest service and the most time in combat would be first to return.

Industry had to wait for the change to peacetime production as well. Now that guns, tanks, and planes were no longer needed, it was necessary to shift to making refrigerators, autos, toasters, and washing machines. All those items so long absent from stores were now in great demand. The demand was so great that long waiting lists resulted. For some, with more money than patience, a few hundred dollars "under the counter" jumped them to the head of the waiting list. Some dealers began to ask almost any price they wished for goods. Gradually the supply of these goods caught up with the demand, and illegal buying practices stopped.

The year 1948 saw the first post-war national election. New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey, the Republican candidate, was picked to win over President Truman. But the Republicans received a bigger shock in 1948 than they had back in 1892 when Grover Cleveland defeated Benjamin Harrison. Niagara Falls, following the nation, gave Truman 6200 more votes than Dewey.

Why were the Fifties an uneasy decade?

Scandals, Communism, and war shook America

The 1950's saw many of the same things as the 1920's, which was also a post-war period. Scandals once again rocked the nation. This time the Democrats were on the receiving end of charges of wrong-doing by public officials. Russia emerged as one of the leading world powers. Communism, as in the 1920's, was again under attack. The great demand for all kinds of goods produced a period of prosperity like that of the Twenties.

But there were important differences too. A war without arms was conducted between the former allies in the war. Russia faced the West in a battle of nerves. This struggle, called the "Cold War,"

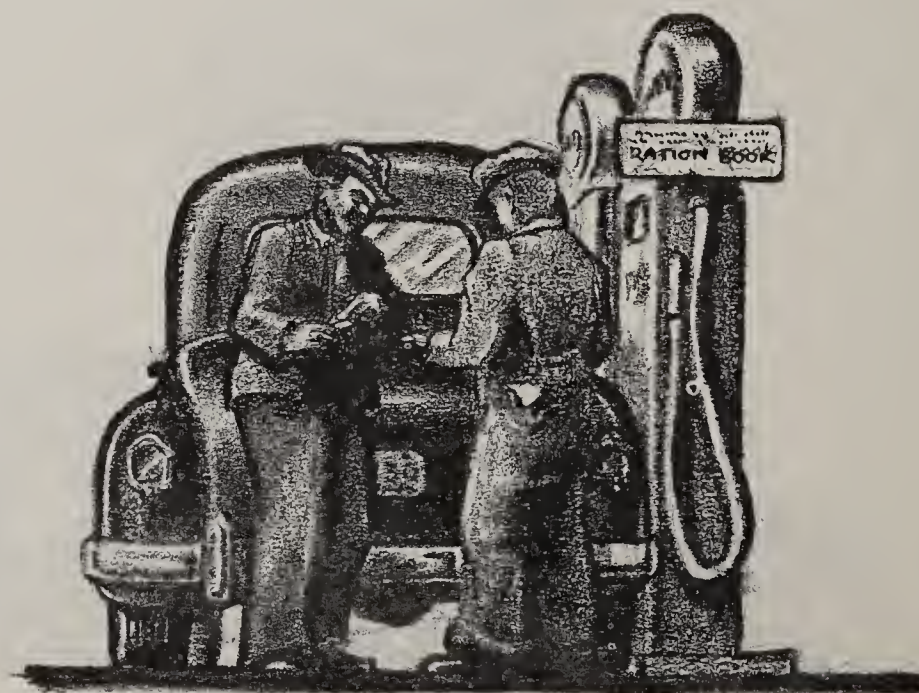
pushed other news from the front pages. It broke out into open conflict in the Korean War. And again Niagara County men went to war.

Niagara County helped elect Eisenhower

In 1952, the Republicans ran a war hero, Dwight D. Eisenhower, for president. He campaigned on Democratic scandals and the results of twenty years of a Democratic stranglehold on big business. The Republicans defeated the Democratic candidate, Adlai Stevenson. An unusual number of Niagara County voters turned out in the 1952 election. The county went Republican, although Niagara Falls gave Stevenson more votes than Eisenhower.

The economy grew in spurts

The biggest factor in the 1950's, as in the 1920's, was economic growth. New York was the scene of the two great building projects. One was the St. Lawrence Seaway, and the other was the Niagara Power project at Niagara Falls and Lewiston. The New York State Power Authority became a big name in the news. It moved houses, streets, and power lines to make way for its great project.



Gasoline was one of the rationed products during World War II.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

SCOURCE 1954 CENSUS

MILK COWS NO. 1,072
CHICKENS NO. 16,046
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 140,494

SOMERSET

APPLES BU. 346,454
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 579,296
PEACHES BU. 48,121
PEARS BU. 7,131
GRAPES LB. 59,375

NEWFANE

MILK COWS NO. 874
CHICKENS NO. 39,637
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 545,896
APPLES BU. 431,369
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 1,279,367
PEACHES BU. 154,423
PEARS BU. 5,890
GRAPES LB. 14,253

HARTLAND

MILK COWS NO. 1,451
CHICKENS NO. 39,587
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 385,347
APPLES BU. 123,987
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 800,483
PEACHES BU. 10,565
PEARS BU. 1,210
GRAPES LB. 56,855

PORTER

MILK COWS NO. 756
CHICKENS NO. 25,902
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 135,760
APPLES BU. 349,524
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 494,562
PEACHES BU. 128,768
PEARS BU. 26,641
GRAPES LB. 583,687

WILSON

MILK COWS NO. 1,356
CHICKENS NO. 38,673
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 385,347
APPLES BU. 275,773

SOUR CHERRIES LB. 663,584
PEACHES BU. 61,903
PEARS BU. 5,088
GRAPES LB. 1,039,345

LEWISTON

MILK COWS NO. 725
CHICKENS NO. 17,373
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 406,879
APPLES BU. 87,149
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 362,772
PEACHES BU. 32,262
PEARS BU. 5,587
GRAPES LB. 2,721,892

MILK COWS NO. 1,066
CHICKENS LB. 29,357
SWEET CHERRIES 130,903

CAMBRIA

APPLES BU. 61,279
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 465,891
PEACHES BU. 9,530
PEARS BU. 4,689
GRAPES LB. 2,198,817

LOCKPORT

MILK COWS NO. 1,297
CHICKENS NO. 25,645
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 213,945
APPLES BU. 114,483
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 441,429
PEARS BU. 3,977
PEACHES BU. 20,429
GRAPES LB. 230,813

ROYALTON

MILK COWS NO. 1,747
CHICKENS NO. 33,382
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 147,099
APPLES BU. 237
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 773,997
PEACHES BU. 19,422
PEARS BU. 3,557
GRAPES LB. 28,702

NIAGARA

MILK COWS NO. 850
CHICKENS NO. 21,196
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 7,478
APPLES BU. 12,756

WHEATFIELD

SOUR CHERRIES LB. 24,004
PEACHES BU. 1,017
PEARS BU. 3,185
GRAPES LB. 342,289

PENDLETON

MILK COWS NO. 653
CHICKENS NO. 15,503
SWEET CHERRIES LB. 10,524
APPLES BU. 4,371

MILK COWS NO. 135
CHICKENS NO. ●
SWEET CHERRIES LB. ●
APPLES BU. ●
SOUR CHERRIES LB. ●
PEACHES BU. ●
PEARS BU. 29
GRAPES LB. 3,116

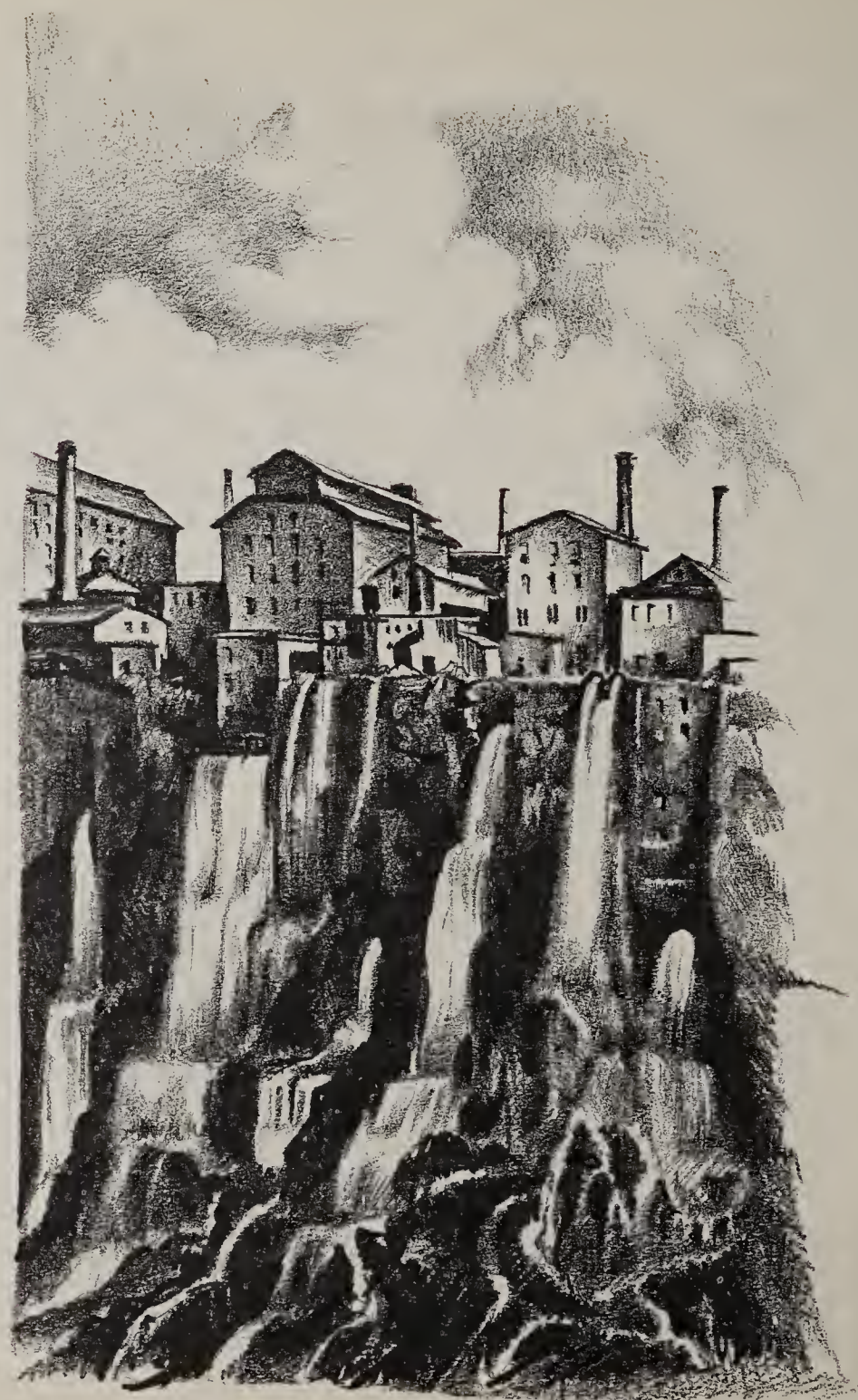
SOUR CHERRIES LB. 209,325
PEACHES BU. 128,768
PEARS BU. 823
GRAPES LB. ●

● DATA NOT AVAILABLE

Following the pattern of the Twenties there was a boom in other types of building in the city of Niagara Falls and in the county. Nearly every community could point to new schools and industries that were built during the 1950's. Home building pushed beyond the city and village limits into the countryside. Industries also expanded and the stock market reflected this boom. It reached record heights. A sharp, though temporary, setback hit the nation in 1957-58. This recession hit the Niagara Falls area hard. There was a sharp increase in the number of unemployed. Such industries as the Bell Aircraft Company were especially hard hit.

By early summer of 1959, things were on their way up again. Even the Cold War seemed to be easing. Vice-President Nixon visited Russia. Another high point was the visit of Russian leader Nikita Khrushchev to the United States. The year closed with President Eisenhower visiting the countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and India. The year 1960 dawned with people looking hopefully to a future of peace and prosperity. But by the summer of 1960 the Cold War was going strong and tensions among nations rising.

In this chapter we have tried to show how Niagara County history was a part of national history and how Niagara County and the nation became so closely united that national problems were Niagara's problems. But so far in the last few chapters, we have said little of industry, power, and business. These important topics make up the subject of the following chapters.



Your History Workshop

Words and terms you should know

reform	liberalism	Nazi Party	Cold War
trusts	recession	Bull Moose party	civil rights
normalcy	tow-path	stock market	bootlegger
alien	prejudice	indictment	inflation
			party platform

Where is it on the map?

Europe	Pearl Harbor	Cold Harbor
South America	Germany	Shenandoah Valley
Asia	Russia	Poland
Japan	Appomattox	Cedar Mountain

Who's Who in history?

DeWitt Clinton	Adolph Hitler
William Morgan	Robert E. Lee
Benjamin Rathbun	Ulysses Grant
William Mackenzie	John J. Pershing
Washington Hunt	Nikita Khrushchev
Colonel Peter A. Porter	Leon Czolgosz
Peter A. Porter Jr.	Franklin D. Roosevelt
Zimmerman	

How carefully did you read?

1. Why did feelings against the Masons develop?
2. What new political practice was started by the Anti-Mason Party?
3. What was the source of the 1832 cholera epidemic?
4. How does the *Caroline* figure in Niagara County history?
5. What was the platform of the Know-Nothing party? Name some important men who supported the party and some who opposed it.
6. Explain the purpose and operation of the Underground Railroad.
7. What were the two most famous Niagara fighting units to take part in the Civil War? In what action did each engage? Name the commanders of each unit.
8. What was the purpose of the Fenian invasion?
9. How did Rutherford Hayes earn the name "Old 8 to 7"?
10. Who were the "Big Four"? How did they control county politics?
11. Why was the stevedore system the source of labor trouble in North Tonawanda during the 1890's?

12. The chief election issue in 1892 was the tariff. Explain.
13. How did Niagara County vote in 1896, Democratic or Republican?
14. What great event opened in Buffalo in 1901?
15. What was the importance of the muckrakers in the reform movement during the turn of the century?
16. Why did people fear trusts? Who was the "trust buster"?
17. How was Niagara's "Good Old Cow Campaign" connected with reform?
18. Explain the term "Roaring Twenties."
19. What were some evils of the "Red Scare" in the 1920's?
20. Cite examples of 1920 prosperity in Niagara Falls.
21. How did Niagara County and the nation fight the depression?
22. Why were the Fifties an uneasy decade?

Activities to help you understand Part IV

1. Complete the following chart

Presidential Candidates	Year	Political Parties	Major Issues	Winner
Rutherford Hayes	1876	Repub.	Dishonesty of Reps. in office	Hayes
Samuel Tilden		Dem.		

2. Draw an organization chart of Niagara County government. Search your school and public library for sources of information.
3. Imagine that you are a member of your city council or town board. With some classmates hold a meeting to show this group in operation.
4. What is the basis of local political party organization? To explore this, get a map of your city or town from the city or town hall which shows the voting districts and polling places. Next find out the names and political parties of the committeemen (or councilmen) representing the districts (wards). Print neatly the names and parties in the appropriate districts. Then arrange for an interview with your district committeeman which covers these questions:
 - a. How did he win office?
 - b. What is the job of a committeeman?
 - c. What is his responsibility to his party?
 - d. What is his relationship to the county party? the state party?
 - e. How important is patronage to his party?

- f. How would a citizen become an active party member?
- g. How does one begin to run for office?
5. Write a letter to a friend describing your city's government.
6. Choose a particularly interesting event of the period studied and paint or sketch a picture to represent it. (The burning of the *Caroline*, for example.)
7. Make a model of one of the barges used on the Erie Canal.
8. Write a short biographical sketch of a favorite personality in Part IV.
9. On an outline map of Europe color in the countries representing the *Central Powers*, and in contrasting color, the *Allied Nations of Europe*. Then locate these decisive battles: Chateau-Thierry, St. Mihiel, and Argonne Forest. Select a title for the map.
10. On an outline map of the world color in nations of the *Axis Powers*, and in contrasting colors, the *Allied Nations*. Label this map "World War II Foes."
11. Continue with your collection of costume pictures and drawings. Do not forget to add the uniforms worn by women in World War II (WACS, WAVES, etc.).
12. Arrange the following events in the order in which they happened and then place them on the class time line: Fort Sumter and the dates when both World Wars began and ended. When your group has decided upon other important events in national and local history, discuss them with your teacher before adding any to the timeline.
13. Find in an American History textbook, or other source, a chart tracing the development of American political parties since Revolutionary times. Copy this chart onto the blackboard. Ask the class to identify those parties mentioned in Part IV of *Outpost of Empires*. Perhaps you would also like to put a time line on the board, and as the class identifies the parties, fill in on the line the names of the parties and the dates they came into being.
14. Make a list of the parties and depressions mentioned in the unit. Then construct a line graph (your teacher will show you how) to show the periods of depression and prosperity. Use the library for information.
15. Debate: Resolved, that the Know-Nothings were not justified in their fears.
16. Write a "Who am I" riddle of a person mentioned in the part IV. Present it to the class for solution.
17. Let a panel consider the question, "What conditions in Niagara County helped create the American party?" The discussion

should involve specific examples.

18. Plan a "You Are There" program. Dramatize one of the following:
 - a. Opening of the Erie Canal, 1825.
 - b. Opening of the Pan-American Exposition, 1901.
 - c. The Anti-Mason party Convention, 1832.
19. Compare the causes of the First and Second World wars. Rule a piece of notebook paper vertically into two parts so the causes can be listed side by side. Other history books besides *Outpost of Empires* will explain why world war came about. Perhaps you will want to check them against the causes listed in your book to come up with the common ones. In any case, be prepared to point out similarities between World War I causes and those of World War II.

Books with exciting stories

- Adams, Samuel, *Banner by the Wayside*. 1947. Grades 6-9.
- Angelo, Valenti, *The Bells of Bleeker Street*. 1949. Grades 6-9.
- Eastman, E. R., and Ladd, C. E., *Growing Up in the Horse and Buggy Days*. 1942. Grades 9-12.
- Enright, Elizabeth, *The Saturdays*. 1941. Grades 6-9.
- Kerr, Laura, *Doctor Elizabeth*. 1946. Grades 6-9.
- Swift, Hildegard H., *The Railroads to Freedom: A story of the Civil War*. 1938. Grades 7-12.
- Further information on local communities can be found in the series *Occasional Publications* of the Niagara County Historical Society.
- Boyce, Anson A., *Selections from a Narrative along Three-fourths of a Century*. 1952.
- Kaiser, Mrs. Charles A., *Streets of Lockport*. 1949.
- Kimball, Helen, *A Homely Approach to Lewiston*. 1954.
- Lacy, Mrs. Elbert O., *Dusty Lockport Pages*. 1952.
- Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin L., *History of Youngstown, N.Y.* 1951.
- Newell, Roy A., *History of Newfane*. 1950.
- Nichols, Henry M., *Recollections of the Pan-American Exposition*. 1951.
- , *Recollections of the Pan-American Exposition*. 1952.
- , *The Twilight Years of My Native Town*. 1956.
- Pechumian, L. L., *Niagara County and Its Towns*. 1958.
- Porter, Ruth B., *The Story of Somerset*. 1960.
- Spaulding, Lyman A., *Recollections of the War of 1812 and Early Life in Western New York*. 1949.
- Winner, Julia Hull, *Yesterday in Royalton*. 1957.
- Yates, Raymond F., *The Old Lockport and Niagara Falls Strap Railroad*. 1950.

Part V

FARMING AND INDUSTRY MAKE NIAGARA STRONG

- 12. Agriculture helps build a strong county
- 13. Invention and skill provide power to start
new industry
- 14. Industrial Niagara gains strength
- 15. Man finds new ways to increase
Niagara's power output

12. Agriculture helps build a strong county

Farming has always been an important way of making a living in the region we call Niagara County. In this chapter we trace the changes that take place in the life of the farmer. This can be told in three stages. The first stage is "subsistence farming" — the farmer himself used nearly all of the products he grew on his farm. From about the beginning of the nineteenth century until about 1825, the farmer sold only a small part of his produce. In the second stage, from 1825 until 1850, farmers changed from subsistence agriculture to commercial farming — the farmer sold more and more of his products to the city dwellers. In the third stage, from about 1900 to the present, "market agriculture" became the most important way of farming. During this last period, the farmer sold more and more of his products to the city merchant. In turn, the farmer himself became more and more dependent upon the city merchant for goods.

Pioneers do subsistence farming

What were early farms like?

The land had to be cleared

The tall oak creaked and slowly began to topple toward the earth. As the tree swayed, the sharp popping sound of breaking wood got louder. Faster and faster it fell, until it came crashing to the ground. The huge branches bounced once from the shock. Then, as if resigned to its fate, the tree settled back to the forest floor.

The woodchopper stood for a moment looking at the results of his labor. Before him stretched an endless number of other trees, all awaiting his axe. This man was a Niagara frontier farmer, busy with the hard task of clearing the forest from his land.

Behind him was the result of a full year's work of his busy axe—about three and one half acres of cleared land. In this cleared patch in the woods, Indian corn was growing. Scattered among the corn were the many stumps of the trees he had first cut down.

Around the edge of this field, he had built a zig-zag fence out of wooden rails. Just beyond the fence stood many trees with their green leaves drooping. These trees were dying. They had been "girdled." A strip of bark and living wood had been cut out all around the trunk. The life-giving sap had ceased to flow between

the roots and the leaves. There they stood, great, tall trees, dying in the sun. It was a dismal sight.

The farmer wiped his brow with the sleeve of his shirt. The insects were very troublesome, especially the big mosquitoes. His neighbor had been unable to work for several days because of the poisonous welts raised along his forearms by the pesky things.

Animals were necessary for food and work

The sound of tinkling bells came from beyond the fence. Here his three cows were browsing on the twigs and shoots of the forest trees. His cows were almost as important as his axe in making the land fit for plowing. They fed on the new growth that shot up from the stumps and seeds on a piece of land that had been cleared but not yet farmed. The grazing of the cattle prevented the land from going back to underbrush and becoming a mass of young trees and bushes that would be another task to clear away.

Of course these cows would not give much milk. Their food was too poor for that. But this farmer was luckier than his neighbors, many of whom had only one cow. A few sheep, which an English traveler said looked more like goats, and some long-legged and skinny hogs made up the rest of his livestock.

Besides these animals, he had a pair of oxen. With these solid, steady beasts he plowed the field, pulled stumps, and would someday take his goods to market.

Market days were some time away at this stage of his farming. Most of the products that he raised were used by his family on the farm.

The kind of farming we have just described is the first stage of pioneer farming. It is called "subsistence farming."

Frontier farming was a poor living

During this time the farmer is busy improving his land — making his "provements," as he calls the clearing of the forest, the building of fences, the pulling of stumps, the improving of his log home. He is turning his sweat into a farm that will later produce a living for him. He may continue to work the farm and then leave it to his sons. Or he may sell it to a newcomer, and take off for lands further west.

In any case, this is a time that sees him short of everything except the bare needs of life. He will not have a fancy beaver hat, nor a fine team of horses and a carriage. His wife will not have fine furniture in her house. This frontier farmer, and his family, have given up an easy life for the present for the sake of the future.

Today is a time of hard work, made easier perhaps by the thought of a fine future. Tomorrow will be a time of plenty, of independence on a mortgage-free farm.

Black salts gave the farmer some money Putting all he had into the land, and using what it produced, the farmer had little cash. There wasn't very much that he could spare for sale. Still, there were things that he couldn't make himself that he had to have. There was powder and ball for his gun. Iron kettles were needed. Links of chain and knives and other implements had to be purchased. Some of these items he could get by bartering at the nearest trader's store. But cash was his great need. He must find something he could sell for cash!

And he found it. Not from his farm products, but from the very thing he was trying to get rid of—the forest. Long before he could raise enough grain to sell in the market, he was selling black salts, timber (if near a lake or a river), and maple syrup (if he had a "sugar bush"). These would give him cash to buy needed goods, help pay for his land, and meet his tax bill.

Black salts were made from wood ashes, and wood ashes were one thing he had plenty of. When the girdled trees were burned they produced large amounts of wood ashes. These the farmer collected and placed in a "leach." This might be a hollow log, or a large box made out of wood slats. It was larger at the top than at the bottom. At one end of the bottom was a hole, and beneath this hole was a tub or a "five-pail" kettle.

The leach was filled with ashes and water was poured over them. The liquid which "leached out," a lye, was then boiled in large kettles. After cooling, this formed a hard lump, called pot ash. The liquid was often boiled a shorter time and then it made a black, sticky mass called "black salts."

This was hauled to the nearest ashery, where it was baked in ovens and made into pearl ash, or saleratus. Pioneer women used this in place of baking powder in bisquits, cakes, and corn bread. In 1824 Niagara County had twenty-two asheries, as well as many sawmills based upon the forest resources. In hard times, such as those of 1816 and early 1817, the money that came from black salts helped the farmer to make his yearly payments on the land.

Farmers look to markets

What became the chief cash crop?

Wheat ranked first Agricultural products soon overtook forest products as the chief source of the farmer's income. Wheat as the chief cash crop had been established in New

York for a long time. During colonial days, New York was known as one of the "bread" colonies because of the large amounts of wheat and flour it exported.

Some of the best wheat in the state was raised on the Niagara frontier. In 1849 the county produced about 900,000 bushels, a record year. But disaster was near. During the next ten years the wheat crops became poorer and poorer. An insect called the wheat midge attacked the wheat and spoiled it. The lowest production ever was the 133,000 bushels reported for 1859.

Before Niagara County could recover from the damage done by the wheat midge, the vast wheat lands of the midwest were sending their annual production eastward. Niagara County farmers continued to grow this crop, however. They discovered that winter wheat, the type that is planted in the late fall and harvested the following July, escaped most of the damage done by the midge. Today most of the wheat raised in the county is winter wheat.



The soil and climate of the county are well suited to wheat. The level land also makes the use of machinery in harvesting possible. Better farming methods have raised the yield per acre. The frontier farmer averaged about 16 bushels per acre. This rose to about 19 by 1879. By 1954, it had risen to about 28 bushels per acre.

Of all acres on which small grains were grown, about 53 per cent was given over to wheat in 1854. In this year the farmers produced about 650,000 bushels. But beginning as early as about 1845, orchards began to take over land formerly given to wheat. For the last thirty years, however, wheat acreage has remained steady at about 23,000 acres.

Corn was important Before the pioneer farmer could plant wheat, he had to "scour" the ground with corn. One or two crops were necessary. It wheat was planted in the newly-cleared land it "all went to grass." That is, the wheat produced a large growth of leaves, but the heads of wheat would be very small and the amount of grain thus produced would be little.

Corn has always been an important crop in the agriculture of the state. The farmers of today raise about the same amount as the farmers of a century ago. In 1849 the corn crop amounted to 731,000 bushels. In 1954, it was 787,000 bushels. But the 1849 crop was ground into meal and flour. The present day crop is used in this way but is also fed to cattle as ensilage. As the amount used for grain declined, the amount used as ensilage grew. The result is that the county produces about the same amount of corn, but for different uses.

The number of acres devoted to corn has changed over the years. Between 1890 and 1930, there was a sharp drop in acreage. Since 1930 the acreage has been increasing until it is about 23,000 acres today. The corn itself has changed. The old Indian corn produced small ears. Today, by the process of cross-fertilization, new seed stocks are available. These produce much larger ears and many more ears per plant.

Oats, barley, rye and buckwheat production declined Among the grains, oats has always been one of the leading crops in the county. Forty per cent of county grain acreage was in oats in 1954. This shows that oats, as well as wheat, is an important crop to Niagara County farmers. Oats are needed as feed for the animals. When horses were widely used on the farm and in the cities, a large amount of oats was raised. The farms produced about 900,000 bushels in 1889. Eventually, the change to cars, tractors, and trucks reduced the demand for oats. The amount produced has thus steadily declined.

A similar drop can be seen in the amount of barley, rye, and buckwheat produced. Barley was once important for the malt made from it for the brewing of beer. It never was as important as wheat or oats, and, while 339,000 bushels were produced in 1890, today only about one-tenth as much is raised. Rye and buckwheat have always been lowest in production in Niagara County. In the past ten years rye has averaged about 5000 bushels. Buckwheat has been a bit stronger with better than 22,000 bushels produced in 1954.

Each of these grains shows a steady decline in the acreage devoted to it. Buckwheat has dropped off considerably in the past forty years, and since 1889, so has barley.

Fewer potatoes were grown Another crop whose acreage has decreased rather steadily is potatoes. In 1859, Niagara County farmers grew more than one-half million bushels. In 1954, they raised about one-tenth this amount.

Alfalfa production tripled One of the crops that has greatly increased in the county is alfalfa. This cattle-food is rather new, having come into wide use during the past fifty years. For a long time farmers did not understand its cultivation. Sometimes good crops would be obtained the first year it was planted. Then each year after that the crop would get smaller. It was not until the turn of the century that its cultivation was understood. Since then it has been one of the fastest growing crops in New York State. The acreage devoted to it has grown so that in 1954 its production was three times as large as that of just ten years before.

Vegetable crops increased Another increase has been marked up by the vegetable crops. Such common items as tomatoes, carrots, cabbage, broccoli, onions, lettuce, asparagus, and many more garden vegetables are grown in ever-increasing amounts. The past ten years, however, has seen a drop in the acreage devoted to them. Whether this is a temporary drop, or the beginning of a long term change is hard to tell.

What happened in the dairy industry?

Like other New York counties, Niagara has always had large numbers of dairy cows since about 1850. The early cattle were simply called "natives," and they were poor indeed compared to the cattle of today. Of the early breeds, the Shorthorn and the Durham were the most popular.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, various "purebred" associations were formed in the state. These tried to get farmers

to raise certain breeds of cattle as well as to practice selective breeding to improve the herds. Through their efforts such cattle as the *Jersey*, *Guernsey*, *Ayrshire*, and *Holstein* were introduced. *Lewis Allen* of nearby *Black Rock* was the founder of the *Shorthorn Herd Book*. Here records were kept of the breed lines and milk production of this type of cattle.

The early farmer kept a cow that could both produce milk and "lay on flesh." This was a double-purpose cow for it could be milked and later killed for its meat. Some breeds were favored because they could do both of these things and produce good oxen as well. The Devon breed was one of such. Later single purpose breeds were produced. The ones which became more popular in New York State were the good milk producers. Thus today the Holstein is the most common breed to be found throughout the state.

A century ago, farmers in Niagara had about 12,000 dairy cows. Today the number is about the same, 12,700. In the years between, the number remained fairly level at about 13,000. Of course, milk production today is greater because the breeds are better milk producers. The leading dairy towns are Cambria, Hartland, Lockport, Newfane, Royalton, Somerset, Wheatfield, and Wilson. Each of these has more than 1000 cows apiece.

Niagara County has never been a leader in milk products as have other western New York counties like Erie, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua. The emphasis was upon grain crops and fruit and vegetable farming. The county did rise to 19th position in the butter producing counties of the state in 1900. This was due to a drop in the amount of butter produced in the former leading butter counties.

Today, most of the milk goes to the large cities and their suburbs. The cities in the county, the villages, and the cities of Buffalo and Rochester in nearby counties, demand great quantities of fluid milk. So the dairy farm has changed. A century ago most of the milk found its way to market as butter or cheese. Today it gets to market in the forty quart milk can.

How did the animal population change?

The gasoline engine replaced the horse When horses were the chief source of power in the state, Niagara had a great many.

About one hundred years ago, there were 11,700 in the county. This number increased to 16,500 in 1890, but since then has decreased steadily. The introduction of trucks and autos gradually reduced the number after 1910. By 1954, there were only about 1000 horses left on the farms. Their duties have

been taken over by the ever-present tractor as well as by the cars and trucks. In that year, 1954, farmers reported more than 4,500 tractors and more than 2000 trucks. In addition much other power equipment was being used. And the power was the gasoline engine, not the horse.

Hogs, sheep and poultry raising declined steadily

Between 14,000 and 15,000 hogs were raised annually in Niagara County until 1920. Then a rapid decline set in. Today there are only about one-half as many hogs as there were thirty years ago.

Sheep-raising has followed a similar course. In 1859 there were 79,000. Today there are less than 500 sheep raised each year.

Poultry has grown rather steadily from about 150,000 chickens in 1860 to about 304,000 today. Some turkeys, ducks, and geese are also raised but not in such large numbers.

Why did Niagara come to be called the "orchard" of New York?

Apples ranked first among the fruits

Of all the agricultural products of Niagara County, her apples are probably the most famous. It was well after the beginning of the nineteenth century before commercial orchards appeared in western New York. Before that time there were home gardens, scattered fruit trees, and a few small orchards near the towns.

One of the early American botanists, John Bartram, traveled through this area about 1740. He mentions in his *Travels* the apples, peaches, plums, and grapes which were growing in the Indian villages. The Sullivan-Clinton campaign in 1779 destroyed many of the orchards of the Senecas in the Genesee region of the state.

An English traveler to western New York in 1796 mentioned the orchard at Fort Schlosser. Here, the wagon-master at the Portage, John Stedman, had an apple orchard of about 1200 trees. These were probably planted about 1775. About 1811, Jarius Rose of Sanborn sold apple seedlings which may have been the start of many of the orchards in the area.

In 1816, Nathan Comstock planted about 700 trees on his farm near Lockport. This was the second orchard of any size in the county. Late spring frosts were a danger to the orchards as these might kill the buds. Low winter temperatures were far less important as a danger. They have done serious damage only once in the past eighty years.

Judge Augustus Porter of Manchester was probably the first to ship apples from the region. In the fall of 1825 he sent two barrels as a sample shipment over the new Erie Canal. One went to Albany, the other to New York. The trade grew in the following years to thousands of barrels.

Until 1845 an apple was just an apple in the average orchard. The same was true of pears and peaches. Variety names meant little or nothing. As the fruit was used largely for fermented or distilled drinks, such as cider or brandy, it mattered little what the type or size of the fruit was. For such purposes as cider making, one apple was considered as good as another.

About 1830, the temperance movement was very important in the state. The followers of this cause were very active in their attempts to reduce the evil of strong drink. This had a definite effect upon the orchards. Many of the farmers neglected their trees or cut them down altogether. Later on the demands of the growing cities for eating apples and pie apples gave a new start to the orchard business.

Western demands for Niagara County apples led to the grafting of newer and better varieties on the old trees. By 1845, Niagara ranked first among the counties in apple production. In that year the county produced about 250,000 bushels.

Science helped apple production

It was not until after the establishment of the colleges of agriculture and the agricultural experiment stations that scientific management was introduced into the orchard business. The care of orchards, the use of fertilizers, the controls for the many insect pests, and methods of harvesting and storing the crops all received the attention of experts.

One of the constant problems in growing fruit is the control of insect pests that attack the trees, buds, and fruit. The coddling moth was an old enemy. About 1900 another pest was accidentally introduced from Japan. This was called San Jose scale. The Bartlett pear tree and currant bushes were its favorite targets.

J. S. Woodward of Lockport, a fruit grower and an agricultural editor, was the first to suggest arsenate of lead as a spray to control the coddling moth. The first power sprayer was introduced about 1894. By 1900 they were fairly common and insect control was beginning. This was one of the most important steps forward in the history of the fruit raising business of Niagara County.

Nearly fifty years later, another step forward came with the use of organic sprays. In 1954 the use of these sprays reduced the damage caused by apple scab. The production of apples in the county soared after about 1940 even though there were fewer trees in production than there had been fifty years ago.



In spite of the effectiveness of the many new insecticides, it is quite interesting that the first one used, arsenate of lead, is still being employed. This old and established spray is the best one to control the apple maggot.

Changes have also occurred in the kinds of apples that the farmer grows. About 1896, S. A. Beach made a study of the apples of the state. He found that more Baldwin apples were grown than all the other varieties put together. Of the apples that are grown today, only the Wealthy and the MacIntosh were important in 1896. The Wealthy was 26th, and the MacIntosh 27th, in the list of 33 varieties grown at that time.

Today MacIntosh and Cortland are the most widely grown apples. Rhode Island Greenings and Wealthy apples are the next in importance. The Starking, Red, and Yellow Delicious are increasing. Improvements in cold storage handling have been a factor in this increase.

The Rome Beauty is an important fall-winter apple. It is gradually replacing the Northern Spy, which is more subject to disease.

The kinds and quantities of apples a farmer grows depend on many things. There were great orchards of Baldwin, Northern Spy, and Rhode Island Greenings in the county up to 1934. The winter of 1933-'34 was a very hard one and many of these orchards were destroyed. This was especially true of the apple orchards in the town of Royalton where most of the apples grown were of these kinds. Damage was extensive throughout the county

Marketing affected apple production As more uses are found for apples, new kinds are grown to meet the new needs. The chief use of apples prior to 1845 was to make cider. When the demands increase to include apples for pies, apple butter, and apple sauce, and barreled apples for the fresh fruit market, more attention is paid to apples that will keep well and stand up when they are shipped far away. Experiment stations cooperate with orchard owners to develop new varieties which have special qualities for special needs. The Rome Beauty is a good example. Because this apple is hard, it does not bruise easily on the trip to market. It keeps well and its bright red color makes it attractive to the buyer.

A grape was named Niagara In 1868, three years after the Civil War had ended, a far-reaching event took place in Lockport. Just inside the village line, where today stands the Odd Fellows Home, the nursery of Hoag and Clark was planting a fortune as well as growing seedlings for farmers.

B. Wheaton Clark of this firm had just crossed a Concord grape with a Cassady. The vine which was selected from this experiment made steady growth and produced its first grapes in 1872. The new grape was rather late ripening, white in color, and of fine quality. It was named the Niagara.

To sell the new variety a company was formed. The Niagara White Grape Company was begun with a capital stock of \$300,000 in one hundred dollar shares. The vines themselves cost from \$1.50 to \$2.00 each, wholesale. This was too high a price for most of the farmers who wanted to grow them commercially. It was clear that the company would have to make some special arrangements if it hoped to get vineyards of Niagaras planted in the county.

The special arrangement arrived at was this. The farmer got the vines for his acres by agreeing to give the company all the "wood" from pruning and one-half of the grapes for ten years. At the end of that time, the vineyard would be his. The grower had to furnish the stakes and wire for the vines to grow on and do all the work of caring for the vines and harvesting the grapes. The company would do the pruning.

During the winter months, four growers spent their time preparing the cuttings of the vine for spring planting. In this way new vines were started which were sold to others interested in raising the profitable new grape. At its peak the Niagara was being produced in 865 vineyards. Vines were planted in the grape counties of central New York. The new variety found its way to Massachusetts and even to Florida. Its fame traveled across the sea and vines were sent to France to be tried there.

Special efforts were made to sell the fruit on the New York market. A Niagara Grape Marketing Company was formed. This company shipped the grapes in carload or less-than-carload lots to the city. The biggest clusters of grapes were packed in five pound baskets with a "girl" or "certificate" label on them to indicate their high quality. These were sold to the "fancy" trade, whose customers were people of wealth. They brought good prices. The rest of the grapes were sold without the label for the best price the market would bring. The company's agent in New York City would watch the market prices carefully. When the best prices appeared, he would notify the company in Niagara County, and the grapes would be sent to New York.

For some years the trade proved very profitable. Then things took a turn for the worse. Mildew hit the Niagara, causing the grapes to rot. Overproduction of both grapes and vines forced the

price of both downward. The grape was naturally a late-ripeners so the weather had to be good for it to reach its full sweetness. Each of these factors played a part, but in the end the glory of the Niagara dimmed.

Nevertheless, Niagara County stands alone in having its "own" grape. And, if you want to see it, ride out to the Odd Fellows Home in Lockport, drive around to the back, and there, still producing fine bunches of grapes is our own Niagara, the original vine, now almost a hundred years old!

Today most of the grapes grown are the deep purple Concord, though a few Niagaras remain. In 1954 there were better than three-quarters of a million grape vines in the county. And the number of newly planted vines, not yet producing fruit, was double that of fifteen years before.

Niagara grew most of the state's peaches Golden Jubilees, Red Havens, Burbanks, Hale Havens, Elbertas—which will you have? All are famous peaches which are grown in Niagara peach belt.

The outstanding township is Porter. The river and the lake protect the peach orchards of this township from low temperatures. In 1934, after a bad freeze the winter before, the peach trees of Porter produced nearly 75 per cent of the peaches raised in New York State. The other towns were hard hit, but Porter escaped with little damage. This is a good illustration of the way bodies of water help keep temperatures mild.

About one-third of the state's peach trees grow in Niagara County. In 1954 this was about 300,000. They produced about 488,000 bushels of the many varieties grown here. In addition, about 35,000 trees had been planted but were not yet producing peaches.

Pears were abundant In 1851, a Niagara County nurseryman offered 40,000 pear trees for sale. It takes a pear tree about as long as an apple to begin bearing full crops. This is about ten years. The eighteen-fifties, over a century ago, saw a great many pear orchards started in the county.

The number of trees was greatest just after World War I, when there were better than one-half million trees in county orchards. Today there are about 85,000. A large proportion of these are Bartlett's.

Cherry trees increased in number Though apples and pears have declined in the number of trees planted in recent years, another fruit has increased. This fruit is

the cherry. The chief varieties are the Montmorency, a sour cherry; and several sweets, the Bing, Napoleon, Lambert, and Windsor. Although there are more varieties of sweet cherries, most of the crop is sour cherries.

There has been a steady increase in the number of cherry trees. From about 27,000 in 1889, the figure had risen to better than 150,000 by 1954. The sour outnumbered the sweets by four to one. In late years, the cherry had been attacked by virus diseases. In some cases this has meant the destruction of entire orchards.

Plum and prune trees became more important Plum and prune trees are also important in the orchards of the county. There were about 90,000 trees in 1954. The leading varieties

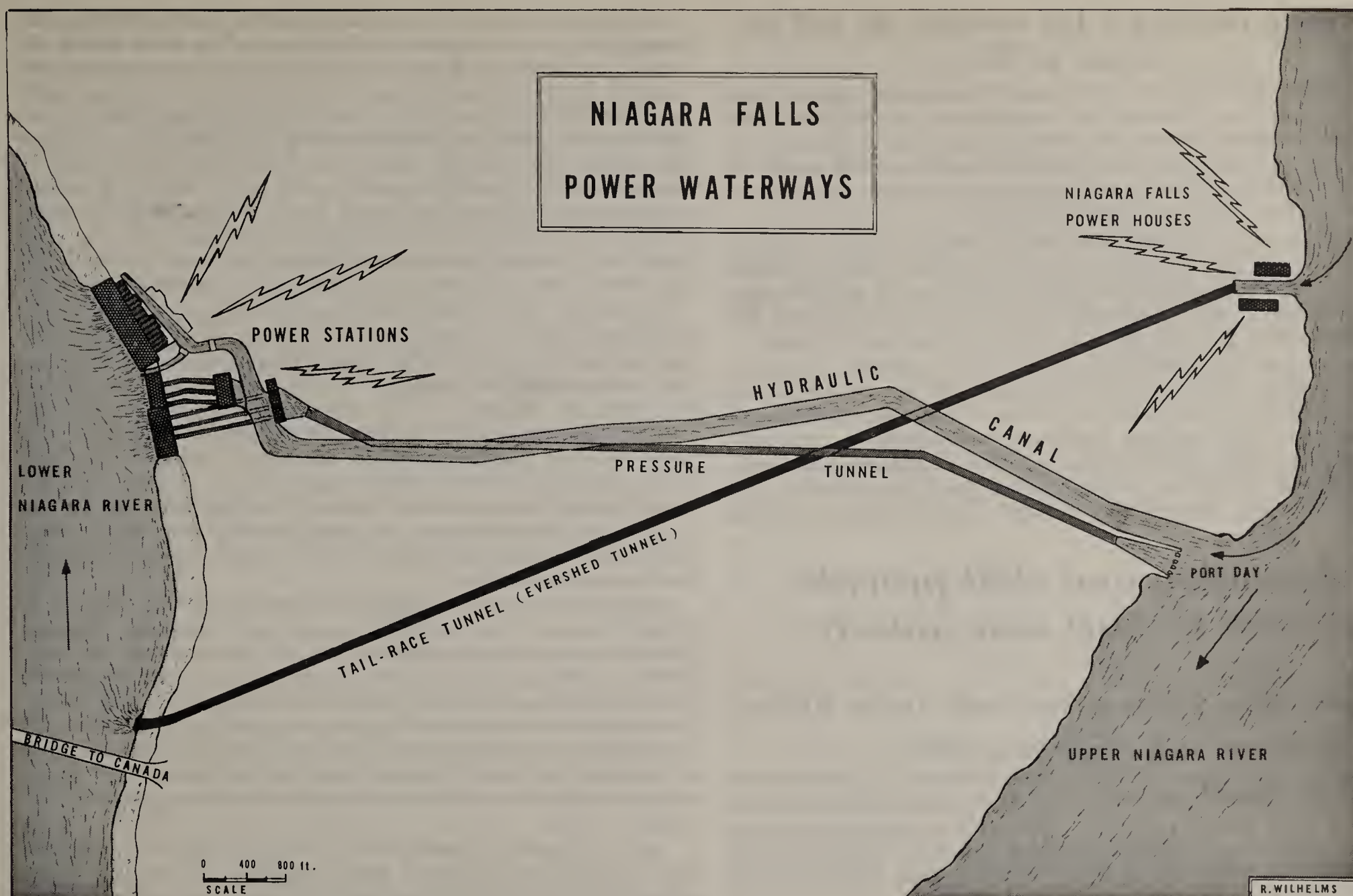
were the Stanley, the Fellenberg, and the Damson. New varieties for the fresh fruit market are being introduced.

How did vegetable production turn out?

Vegetables are an important part of agricultural production, too, in Niagara County. Such items as cabbages, tomatoes, green beans, peas, lima beans, and many other common garden vegetables are raised. Most of these go to canning factories or cold storage plants, but some are sold on the fresh vegetable market. Of course, the roadside stand is still very much in evidence on the highways of the county.

Some changes are occurring in this part of farming as well. Canning factory peas have practically gone, although a few years ago there were many acres of this crop. Climate and weather factors are important here. Other areas of the United States can produce them at a lower cost. Niagara County farmers cannot sell at the low prices these areas can. As a result production of this vegetable has shifted to other areas of the nation.

Another example of the effect other parts of the nation have on Niagara County is cabbage. This vegetable is also grown in the Texas Panhandle and in Georgia, among other areas. The principal cabbage crop of Niagara County is a late storage, or Danish cabbage. If the Texas growers have a good crop year, their cabbage comes to market fresh and green in January. The Niagara cabbage, which has been in storage for some months by this time, comes to market somewhat "blanched" or white. The shopper in the market naturally prefers the nice green cabbage. As a result, the success of the "cabbage year" in Niagara County depends partly on how good a season other areas of the United States have.



Farming becomes a big business as well as a way of life

Farming in Niagara County today is much more complex than it was a century ago. Through the leadership of the New York State College of Agriculture and the Geneva Experimental Station, the farmer knows a good deal more about his business. Each county in the state has a farm agent who has spent years studying agriculture and knows how to aid the farmers of his area.

Many bulletins are published on various agricultural subjects. A farmer can get bulletins on potato growing, raising broiler chickens, repairing and maintaining various types of equipment on his farm, and on many more topics. Cost-accounting bulletins are published which will tell him how much his crops cost to raise.

Today farming is still a way of life. But it is also a business, and a business with guidance. There are 3200 related farm businesses in Niagara County in this period of farm bulletins, special agents, hay balers, milking machines, power sprayers, city-made and packaged goods, frozen foods, television, and commercial recreation. Would the farmer of one hundred years ago recognize the farmer of today? He probably wouldn't until they began talking crops!

13. Invention and skill provide power to start new industry

Niagara uses water power early in its history

How did Joncaire get power for his sawmill?

One day in the year 1757, Chabert Joncaire, Jr., stood on the bank of the American Rapids just above the falls. A short distance up-river from where he stood, the Niagara is as smooth and broad as a lake. But then it narrows somewhat and begins dropping. This drop makes it pick up speed. Before reaching Goat Island, it races into the rapids and then plunges over the falls.

Joncaire had seen all this before. In the beginning it had amazed him. But later he saw that the falls really meant delays and hard work in shipping fur. And many times since he had become Portage Master he had wished that no falls existed at Niagara. Then nothing would keep ships from sailing smoothly between New France (Canada) and the West.

But on this day he did not think about the trouble that the falls caused him. Instead he gazed at the water boiling along among the rocks in the American Rapids. And his mind was on something else—power. He would make Niagara work for him. Its racing water could turn a wheel. And a wheel was only a step away from a sawmill where he could see himself sawing logs into the planks that would mean boats for the western fur trade. And so he rolled up his sleeves and pushed his spade into the earth. He dug a narrow canal, or mill-race, that ran inland from the edge of the river for a short distance and then turned and flowed back into the river again. In it he piled up rocks and timbers and made a dam. Below this dam he set up a water wheel and built his sawmill.

This is the way it worked. Joncaire drew water from the American Rapids and let it sweep inland along his canal. It spilled over his dam and hit the water wheel blades, making the wheel go around and turn the shaft for his saw. The water then ran on and gushed back into the Rapids—a very simple arrangement. And it was nothing new. Americans had brought the idea from Europe. Pioneers put such wheels in streams that nature provided or in mill-races they dug. And they ground their grain and wove cloth and sawed lumber with machinery driven by shafts, belts, and pulleys. This, in fact, was largely the way men got power from falling water until they produced alternating electric current near the end of the nineteenth century.

Joncaire's crude and clumsy water wheel began the conquest of Niagara power. Of course, he had tapped only a tiny part. Niagara holds the power of six million horses. Its water comes from the overflow of the upper Great Lakes. Its usual flow is about 93,150,000 gallons a minute. This is more than 1,500,000 gallons each second. The water that rushes down Niagara every forty-eight hours would cover Manhattan Island with a flood sixty feet deep—the height of a five-story building. Although some falls are higher and wider, more water flows over Niagara than over any other falls in all the world.

As it happened, Joncaire did not keep his sawmill going for long. The French and Indian War, remember, hit Niagara in the summer of 1759. And this was just two years after he built it. The war made him burn down his sawmill to keep the British from getting it.

In late July, the French at Fort Niagara gave up after a hard fight. Niagara then became an outpost of the British Empire. It remained such for the next thirty-seven years. The British were interested mostly in the portage and fur trade. They did practically

nothing for Niagara where power was concerned. John Stedman, the British Portage Master, did dig out Joncaire's old mill-race and rebuild his sawmill. But this was about all.

How did Americans aid development of Niagara's power?

About the time the British moved out, a surveyor named Augustus Porter came to Niagara. He was restless and ambitious. The quiet life in a New England village could not hold him for long. Thus he jumped at the chance to come west with some surveyors going to Ohio. On the way there the party stopped at Niagara. Porter was enchanted by the falls. But for him, as had been the case with Joncaire, they really meant power. Here there was power enough to turn all the wheels in the United States. And he easily imagined an industrial town rising from the surrounding forest.

Porter married and settled at Canandaigua on the New York frontier. Each year, however, he spent some time roaming the western woods on surveying trips. And he often went to Niagara. Finally he made up his mind to stop surveying and go into business there. He moved his wife and family into Stedman's house near Fort Schlosser.

Augustus Porter, his brother Peter B., Benjamin Barton, and Joseph Annin leased the portage from the state and bought land along the Niagara River. This gave them the sole rights to the portage carrying trade. Business there turned out well. In time Porter, Barton and Company expanded greatly.

But Porter desired to use Niagara's power. So he dug a mill-race along the American Rapids and started some industries. Settlers had begun coming in and a village slowly sprouted near the American Falls. Porter named it Manchester. It was named for the great industrial city in England. Just before war flared in 1812, Manchester had a blacksmith shop, a sawmill, a flour mill, a tannery, and a rope walk. All were owned by Porter. The war turned Niagara into an armed camp. With men fighting on both sides of the river, Manchester did not escape misfortune. The British and Indians attacked and burned it in December of 1813.

Peace came in 1815. Things began humming again. Manchester was rebuilt and so were Porter's industries. Porter now turned his eye to Bath Island out in the rapids. This island meant a new power site. So he put a bridge across the rapids. It went all the way to Goat Island. And he did not stop here. He also dug a new canal, known as the "upper raceway," along the rapids above Manchester.

A parade of industries gradually appeared after the war. But Porter did not own them all. A woolen mill went up in 1816. A

blacksmith's forge came next, and then a nail factory and rolling mill. Porter put up a large flour mill in 1822. In the following year a paper mill was built on Bath Island. Meanwhile, Manchester buzzed with talk about the canal that was slowly crawling across New York State.

The Erie Canal changes Niagara County

Americans turned to the conquest and settlement of the West when the War of 1812 ended. The need of western pioneers for supplies helped rebuild the carrying trade over the portage, and this business in turn aided the settlement of the West. But as towns sprouted in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, westerners wanted an easier and cheaper transportation link to the East. Answering western demands for a better route, gangs of laborers, armed with picks and shovels and black powder, began digging and blasting the Erie Canal in 1817. The "Big Ditch," as it was called, took eight years to complete.

It opened in 1825. That autumn, crowds cheered as horses pulled the barge *Seneca Chief* from Buffalo on its first voyage along the canal. Signal cannons, set all along the new waterway, thundered one after another, bringing the news of the opening to New York City.

How did it bring progress?

The roars of these cannons, echoing through the woods and valleys of New York, marked the end of Porter's carrying trade on the portage road. Freight going between New York City and Buffalo could now be moved along the canal waterway much more cheaply. Transportation time, for instance, now dropped from twenty days to eight days and the rates fell from one hundred dollars to between eight and fifteen dollars a ton. The Erie was, in fact, the most important route between the western states and the East until railroad lines appeared in the middle nineteenth century.

How did the canal make the Tonawandas?

The lumbering industry began	Naturally, the Big Ditch sparked the growth of settlements along the way. An important settlement that later became two villages sprang up on Tonawanda Creek, a part of the canal waterway. Irish canal workers settled here, stores and taverns opened, and a handful of cabins soon grew to become Niagara Village. Niagara Village remained a canal village for some years. However, the Erie Canal and the upper Great Lakes promised to this settlement an industrial future.
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This began in the 1830's. Lumbermen started cutting down the white oak trees on nearby Grand Island, and sawmills soon hummed there and in the Tonawandas. In those days men built ships of wood and they liked white oak best. So barge after barge, decks stacked high with lumber, went along the canal waterway to shipyards in New York City. Since there was more than enough, a lot of lumber was also sent to shipyards in New England.

The lumbering industry in the Tonawandas grew steadily. In the 1840's, Colonel Lewis T. Payne set up a steam sawmill there. By the end of the 1840's, lumberjacks had pretty well cleared Grand Island of trees and the land was put up for sale to farmers. But the "jacks" kept swinging their axes and working along the lakes. During the Civil War, Henry P. Smith began rafting logs down the lakes from Michigan to the lumber docks in the Tonawandas.

By the 1870's, lumbering was a big industry, and most of the people in the Tonawandas worked in it. In the mills great saws whined as blades bit into thick logs and scattered sawdust. Towering stacks of lumber bordered the waterfront and lumber docks stuck out like fingers all along the Niagara River. These were the golden years for the twin towns. Their mills furnished boards, shingles, lath, and other building materials for the markets of the world.

But the boom days of the Tonawandas as a leading lumber center actually lasted only about twenty years. During this period, however, they challenged Chicago's lead as the world's biggest lumber market. By the time the 1890's rolled around, the industry had reached its peak. It gradually died down after this because the supply of trees around the upper Great Lakes gave out. With its decline, the twin cities turned to manufacturing.

Modern industry became diversified Probably Wurlitzer is the best-known industry in the Tonawandas today. Wurlitzer makes electric organs, coin-operated phonographs, and other products. But other modern factories there make many different products for our nation and the world. Some of the most important industries produce aircraft equipment, guided missiles, steel and paper products, office supplies, grinding wheels and abrasives, chains, hoists, insulation, chemicals, and fibre and plastic products.

How did the Erie Canal slow Manchester's growth?

The Big Ditch put the Tonawandas on the map. But it slowed down the growth of Manchester. Homeseekers on horsedrawn canal boats pushed on directly to Buffalo, at that time a booming settlement on Lake Erie. Manchester's tourist trade, however,

thrived during these years. In 1829, the performances of daredevil Sam Patch focused the attention of the nation on Niagara Falls. And by the 1830's thousands of sightseers flocked to the falls each year, eager to see and to spend.

But most important for our story here, the Erie Canal held back the development of Niagara power. Some years before the Irishmen dug and blasted out the Big Ditch, pioneers had begun setting wheels in waterways all around Niagara County. Saw and grist mills went up at Manchester, Suspension Bridge, Youngstown, Wilson, Newfane, and Lockport—in any place, in fact, where running water would turn mill wheels. But it was Niagara Falls that had the greatest industrial prospects for the future.

What did the canal do for Lockport?

However, for much of the nineteenth century, mills needed only a tiny part of Niagara's power. Besides, tapping Niagara was a costly business, and after 1825 waterpower was close at hand in other places. Surplus water from the canal was run off through mill-races to mills. The Big Ditch, strung as it was across the state, had opened many such new power sites and made cheap and manageable waterpower available in the amounts manufacturers needed in those days. So these men steered clear of Niagara and bought up power sites along the canal in Lockport.

Thus it was that Lockport, a nearby canal town, mushroomed into a power center. And it remained the most important power center in Niagara County for many years. Months before the Erie Canal opened, New York put overflow canal water up for lease. Investors liked Lockport because here canal water drops sixty feet from the upper to the lower locks. This drop meant abundant, cheap, and manageable water power.

Lockport's power story begins with a man named Darius Comstock. He owned the land around the locks when New York advertised for sale the right to use surplus canal water. Since he owned much of the land near the canal, he thought his bid of fifty dollars a year rent for the water was enough. However, another man, Richard Kennedy, later in partnership with Junius Hatch, bid 200 dollars a year rent for the surplus canal water, but these men did not own land on which to use the water.

In 1825, before the bids on water rights had been taken, Lyman A. Spaulding bought Comstock's land and his bid. Spaulding also bought more land along the canal for water power development. In all, Spaulding spent \$5,500 dollars for land. He wasted no time in digging a mill-race on his property. Then he built a flour mill

and sawmill and began using the surplus canal water. Since Kennedy and Hatch did not own any land on which to build mills, Spaulding thought he would get the lease for water from the state. However, according to law, the lease went to the highest bidder. So Kennedy and Hatch got the lease to use the canal water.

Meanwhile, the Albany Land Company moved into the area and bought 100,000 acres of land below the escarpment from the Holland Land Company. The Albany Company planned to develop this land and build Lowertown to rival Upper Town as the village business center. The Company's agent, Lott Clark, was in charge of the development. Clark, looking for water power, bought the water lease from Kennedy and Hatch. So Spaulding and the Albany Company were now involved in the use of surplus canal water. Spaulding owned the land and the wealthy Albany Company the lease. But Spaulding had support from citizens who feared the development of Lowertown would threaten Upper Town. Citizens even went so far as to stop Albany Company men from digging a mill-race through Spaulding's property.

The Albany Company finally took Spaulding to court to stop him from using surplus canal water. The Albany Company won the long court battle that followed. In 1832, Spaulding sold out to the Albany Company for \$35,000. This ended the dispute over surplus canal water.

The Albany Company now finished the mill-race and a cotton factory went up. Cries for more mill space led the Company to make the mill-race longer. Lockport's industrial growth went on in spite of cholera and the financial troubles during the Panic of 1837. The next important development in the Lockport power story took place in 1856. William Marcy and Washington Hunt leased the canal water and that year started the Lockport Hydraulic Company. This company again extended the mill-race.

During the Civil War water power needs expanded. A big step forward was made at Lockport during these years. The Hydraulic Company blasted a tunnel through the solid rock of the escarpment and tapped the Erie Canal at the head of the locks. This tunnel supplied water to the Holly Manufacturing Company. The Holly Company was a leading Lockport industry in the nineteenth century. It produced sewing machines, pumps, and hydraulic machinery.

In 1869, the company extended this tunnel for the Richmond Company, makers of machinery for processing grain into flour. By this time a fortune had been spent developing waterpower at Lockport. In the years that followed, the Erie Canal became a power

source for many industries there. Until late in the 19th century this city was the most important power center in Niagara County. After this it was surpassed by Niagara Falls.

Some important industries in Lockport today

One of Lockport's oldest existing industries was begun in 1851 by a man named T. R. Bailey. Bailey manufactured machines for making baskets, boxes, and crates for the fruit growers of Niagara County. This business is now a part of Merritt-Solem, a giant in the veneer and plywood industry.

W. S. Levan opened an important Lockport industry in 1870. It is now known as Lockport Mills and it is the largest plant of its kind in the United States. Lockport Mills makes cotton and wool batting, parts for air-conditioning equipment, flame-proof insulation, and the flame-proof cotton batting used under Christmas trees.

Harrison Radiator Corporation ranks as Lockport's biggest industry today. It was started in 1910 and joined General Motors eight years later. The General Motors cars and trucks that speed over the highways of the world are equipped with radiators, heaters, defrosters, and thermostats made by Harrison Division of General Motors at Lockport.

Many factories in and around the city pour out a flood of other products. Chemicals, alloy steel products, high-pressure gas valves, molded plastics, fiberboard, felts, and tackle blocks made in Lockport are used around the globe.

Niagara's power development spurts ahead

How did Porter propose to increase power output?

He enlarged and built a new mill-race

In 1825, the year the Erie Canal was completed, Augustus Porter tried to get bankers and manufacturers to put up money for a new mill-race at Niagara Falls. This race would furnish power for many mills. Porter met with no success. The next year he swung into action on his own. He had the upper raceway extended and a few mills went up there. Then he built a large paper mill on Bath Island for himself. It later burned down and the Niagara Falls Paper Manufacturing Company replaced it with a bigger mill.

Not many industries used Niagara Power in 1831. A nail mill, two flour mills, a woolen mill, a sawmill, and Porter's paper mill on Bath Island completed the list. Power development went ahead slowly here because Lockport's boom in power from overflow canal water met most demand for power in Niagara County. It was not until 1845 that a new mill-race was dug. This canal was

called the lower raceway because it began at the Goat Island bridge and ran to a point near the American Falls. A paper mill, a nail mill, and a woolen mill went up on this new mill-race.

A hydraulic canal was planned Porter tried stirring up interest in Niagara power development again in 1847. This time he drew up a plan for a "hydraulic canal," in other words, a large raceway. This canal would take water from above the rapids and carry it through the village to a water storage basin on the high bank below the falls. The water in the basin would then run through short mill-races to mills that Porter hoped would be built on the high bank. Then the used water, after pushing mill wheels, would spill from outlet tunnels called tail-races down into the gorge and join the river once more.

Porter's plan would give Niagara Falls future industrial space. Otherwise, mills would have to remain on the raceways at the American Rapids. But Porter was ahead of his time. Nobody cared to invest, although he offered the necessary land free of charge. This plan for a hydraulic canal was still on paper when Porter died in 1849.

What progress was made on the canal?

The Niagara Falls Hydraulic Company started to dig Porter's family, however, kept his plan alive. They repeated the offer of free land to any company willing to dig the canal across the village to the high bank. Finally, three years after Porter died, a man from New York City named Caleb Woodhull and one from Boston, Walter Bryant, accepted this offer. In the spring of 1853 these men organized the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Company to dig the canal. An engineer from Boston, Stephen Allen, was an important leader in this company and in the company that later followed it.

Nearby Buffalo was then a growing city and a likely market for goods manufactured in Niagara Falls. And, of course, the nearby Erie Canal was a route to eastern markets. Therefore, the Hydraulic Company planned a harbor and docks at the canal intake opposite Grass Island. Along the canal itself, barges would move to and from the mills on the basin. In 1853, Niagara Falls already had excellent railroad connections. With both land and water transportation available, goods from Niagara Falls mills could be shipped easily to Buffalo and eastern markets.

Ground was broken for the canal soon after the company was formed. Great steam drills chewed up the rock and bored into the limestone to a depth of twenty feet. Forty pounds of black powder were planted in each hole. Blasting sent rocks flying in all directions. Drilling and blasting one hole took a day and a half.

This drilling and blasting went on month after month, and slowly the canal was ripped from the rock. But meanwhile the company had run into financial troubles. Money disappeared into the "ditch" faster than it could be borrowed. At last Woodhull and his friends had to admit defeat. The company was bankrupt. It had sunk at least a half-million dollars into the canal.

Horace Day completed it For two years work was stopped. Then, in 1856, Stephen Allen stepped in and re-organized the old Hydraulic Company. Its name was changed to the Niagara Falls Water Power Company. Allen took over as president. And he also took full charge of the canal construction.

A man now appeared who was to act out an important but tragic part in our story of Niagara Power. His name was Horace Day. He came to Niagara Falls a rich man. But in the end he lost much of his wealth on the hydraulic canal. Day enters our story here as vice-president and treasurer of the new company that Allen formed.

Allen and Day wasted no time. Drilling and blasting picked up where the Hydraulic Company had stopped. By the spring of 1857 the canal had been dug through the high bank. However it was not yet ready for commercial use. But Port Day, the harbor at the mouth of the canal basin, had been completed and was now open for shipping. July 4, 1857, was a great day for Niagara Falls. A big crowd gathered at Port Day. Allen made a speech. He hailed the opening of steamboat transportation from Buffalo. Then three steamers puffed down the Niagara River and entered Port Day harbor. Whistles tooted and the crowd cheered. The future looked bright.

However, the Water Power Company was headed down the road to bankruptcy also. The collapse finally came in 1860, on the eve of the Civil War. By this time almost \$300,000 more had been added to the bill for the canal. Horace Day now made what was in the end a costly mistake, at least for him. He purchased the canal property. Then he reorganized the Water Power Company as the Niagara Falls Canal Company. Day resumed work on the canal. And he kept at it on and off for the next seventeen years.

Meanwhile, the canal was making changes in Niagara Falls. Population rose as laborers came seeking work. An Irish shantytown sprang up at the head of the canal. The canal also put dollars into the pockets of the local businessmen in another way. It became one of the "sights." For a while, in fact, it was almost as big an attraction for tourists as the falls themselves.

But time passed and the work dragged on and on. The canal no longer was a novelty for any one. The people of Niagara Falls began to see it mostly as a dangerous nuisance. A number of them had fallen into it and drowned. Time and time again the Niagara Falls *Gazette* warned people to stay away from it. Shantytown was another sore spot with the people of Niagara Falls. On Saturday nights, hard-drinking workmen and their womenfolk brawled in the streets there and in Niagara Falls itself. More than once, someone was killed before the night was over.

For Horace Day, these were hard years. He kept sinking more and more of his money into the canal. And yet it seemed that it would never be finished. Somehow Day kept his faith in the future of Niagara Falls as a power center. Finally the great day came. The canal was completed and ready for business. Day walked into the *Gazette* office and put an advertisement in the paper offering waterpower and mill sites for sale. It was the spring of 1875.

Charles Gaskill used the canal to run a flour mill This advertisement ran for months and months in the *Gazette*. Meanwhile Day twiddled his thumbs waiting for customers.

Finally one man showed real interest in his proposition. This man was Charles Gaskill. Gaskill, a flour miller, had fought in the Union Army during the Civil War.

Gaskill put up his flour mill on the canal basin in 1875. He began by sinking a shaft twenty-five feet down into the high bank. At the bottom of this shaft he installed improved water wheels called turbines. He drew water from the canal basin. It poured through iron tubes and then fell down the shaft, operating the turbines which in turn provided power for the flour mill. The used water spilled out of a tail-race tunnel at the bottom of the shaft. Gaskill could use only a twenty-five foot fall of water for water power. In 1875 nobody knew how to build a wheel that could stand the shock of water falling the full two-hundred foot distance available on the high bank.

This flour mill alone could not make the hydraulic canal pay for itself. Day knew this and so did everyone else. He needed more customers and he needed them desperately. But nobody was interested

and the situation went from bad to worse. Day had sunk a fortune into the canal over the years. And he was not alone by any means. Stockholders in the Canal Company had invested all they could. On top of it all, Day had borrowed heavily. His company was deeply in debt and all its property was mortgaged. By 1877 he had raised every penny he possibly could. Under these conditions a crash was bound to come. In the spring the people he owed money to would not wait any longer. They put him out of business. Day's Canal Company was finally bankrupt.

Jacob Schoellkopf bought the hydraulic canal On May 1, 1877, Horace Day saw a crowd of gentlemen in frock coats and stove-pipe hats enter the parlor of the Spencer House in Niagara Falls. These men had come to bid at public auction for his canal property. Among them was a merchant from Buffalo named Jacob Schoellkopf.

Schoellkopf was born in Germany in 1819. He came to America as a young man and eventually made a fortune in the leather business. Schoellkopf had earned a reputation over the years for his sound business judgment. And here in the Spencer House on this day he made the best bargain of his life. His bid of \$71,000 put the canal property in his hands. This was not much to pay for something that had, up to this time, cost \$1,500,000. Later, Schoellkopf paid Horace Day another \$5,000. This made the actual purchase price of the hydraulic canal \$76,000.

When the bidding was over, Horace Day followed the crowd down the wooden steps of the Spencer House and along Falls Street. His dream was over, ended with the rap of the auctioneer's hammer back in the Spencer House. Twenty-one years of hopes had vanished into the hydraulic canal. Day's hydraulic canal now belonged to Jacob Schoellkopf of Buffalo. Horace Day pushed his hands into his pockets and walked on.

Schoellkopf made a success of it Many people thought Jacob Schoellkopf had made a mistake that day in the Spencer House by sinking good money into the "ditch." It was nothing but a "white elephant" they said, and Schoellkopf would fail as the others had. But the merchant from Buffalo smiled and went ahead with his plans. In 1878, he and a partner, George Mathews, organized the fourth company to develop power from Niagara. This company was known as the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Company.

Soon after they formed this company, Schoellkopf and Mathews put up two flour mills between the canal basin and the high bank.

One of these flour mills was called the Central Milling Company. It used an eighty-foot fall of water to run its machinery. The other mill to use the canal as a source of power was the Niagara Wood Paper Company.

Three years after the birth of the Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Company, an entirely new development burst upon the Niagara scene. And Schoellkopf originated it. In 1881, he built a hydro-electric generating station in J. F. Quigley's pulp mill on the high bank. Electric power generated here supplied an arc light machine owned by the Brush Electric Light Company, another Schoellkopf enterprise.

An electric light company at Niagara was big news in 1881. Up to this time nobody had thought seriously about electricity in connection with Niagara power. In fact, the practical use of electricity was still very new. So the *Gazette* promptly ran the story. Soon several mills and stores and the *Gazette* office itself had electric lights. More orders for electric lighting poured in. A new era of electricity began at Niagara Falls.

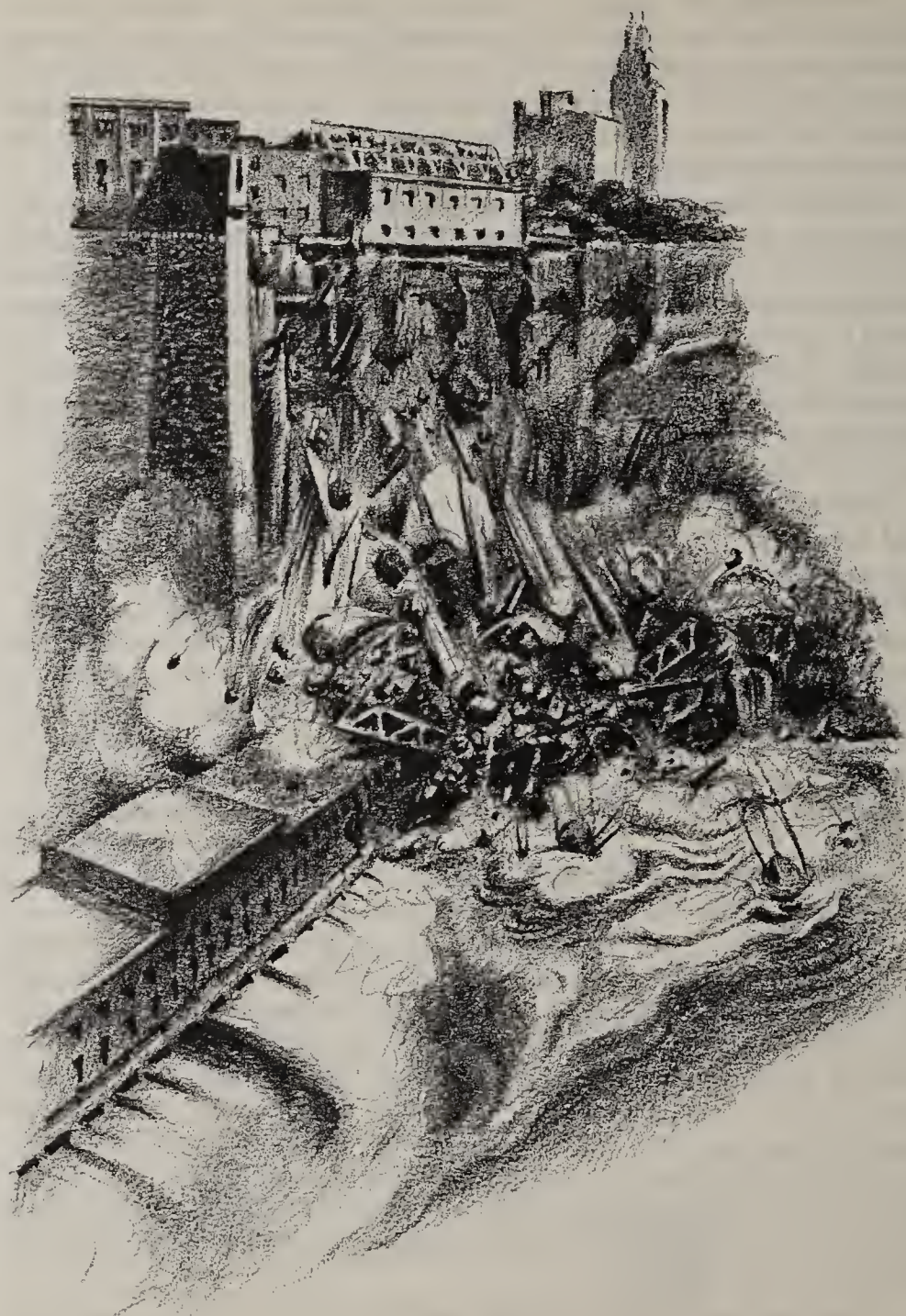
By 1882, Schoellkopf was furnishing water power to seven mills on the high bank. None, however, used the full fall of water—over two hundred feet from the top of the cliff to the bottom of the gorge—which was available. No wheels had yet been developed to withstand the shock of water falling that great distance. But Schoellkopf had made his point—the hydraulic canal could pay for itself.

What was Evershed's plan for increasing power?

This success raised a new problem, that of finding mill sites for the use of the power now available. Mills on the high bank, remember, drew water from the storage basin. The water in the basin drained in from the hydraulic canal which ran from the upper river through the village of Niagara Falls. This arrangement was good except that the power supply was limited to the area just below the storage basin—in other words, to Schoellkopf's power development. And just so much mill space existed there.

There was, of course, another place at Niagara where water power was available. Bath Island and the land along the American Rapids had long been power sites. But this area was already packed with mills. So here too expansion was limited.

Niagara industry was hit hard in 1885. The New York State Reservation was created at Niagara Falls in that year. Goat Island and Bath Island and the strip along the American Rapids became a



Tons of rock smash the Schoellkopf station.

public park. This action by New York saved the beauty of the falls for future generations. But turning this area into a public park cut down the number of power sites available at Niagara. And many mills already built there had to find other locations.

A break in this situation came in 1886. In February, the editor of a Lockport newspaper found an unusual letter in his mail. It had been written by Thomas Evershed, an engineer on the Erie Canal. This letter is important for our story because in it Evershed outlined a new plan for developing Niagara power.

This was his plan. Dig a mammoth tunnel for two and a half miles under the village of Niagara Falls. This tunnel would be a tail-race for mills situated on the surface above it. These mills would pull water to turn wheels and turbines from twelve surface canals connected with the upper river above the Niagara Reservation. The used water would then drop down into the tail-race tunnel and eventually discharge into the gorge.

Evershed's plan caused an immediate stir among business people in Niagara Falls. Charles Gaskill, the flour miller, was among those who recognized its possibilities. In 1886, he helped organize a company to put Evershed's plan into operation. This company was known as the Niagara River Hydraulic Tunnel Power and Sewer Company. Gaskill was president.

But Gaskill's company soon found that raising funds was a big problem. In fact, three years passed before the company had enough money for the tunnel. In 1889, the Tunnel Power and Sewer Company changed its name to the Niagara Falls Power Company. This new company contracted with the Cataract Construction Company to start boring the tunnel. In October, 1890, Gaskill turned the first spadeful of earth and work began.

Evershed's plan had drawbacks. It was costly. But this not all. Tunnel work, especially in limestone, was a difficult task. Besides, in winter the shallow surface canals would probably clog with ice. This of course would cut off power for the mills. Finally, Niagara Falls could not use all the power that could be developed. At this time its population was only about five thousand.

Much of Evershed's plan was abandoned. The company went ahead with its main feature, the tunnel. But it was to be shortened to cut construction costs. The tunnel could be used to carry tail water from turbines located in a central generating station on the upper river to the lower river. The central generating station on the upper river could then send electricity to the surrounding countryside—if a way could be found to send it. A good market for electricity was nearby. This, of course, was Buffalo, a city with over

a quarter of a million inhabitants in 1890. Buffalo was only twenty miles away. But for a while it might just as well have been on the moon. Nobody knew how to send electric power over such a distance. Up to this time, companies that used electric power had always been located near the plants that generated it.

How was hydroelectric power sent to Buffalo?

The greatest minds in the world set to work on this problem of transmitting electric power to Buffalo. A grand prize of \$100,000 was offered for the best solution. In 1890 the International Niagara Power Commission met in London to examine the best plans submitted. This Commission was sponsored by the Cataract Construction Company. It included world-famous American and European scientists and engineers. Nobody won the grand prize. But the commission concluded that electrical transmission of both direct and alternating current was possible.

An argument then developed over which current was better. Among the famous men who took part were Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse. Edison came out for direct current. Westinghouse was one of those who supported alternating current. In the end the Cataract Company chose direct current for local purposes and alternating current to transmit electric power to Buffalo. Meanwhile, the tunnel had been completed in December, 1892.

George Westinghouse got the contract to build the huge alternating current generators. The Cataract Company had them installed in Power House Number One at the beginning of the discharge tunnel. Transmitting power to Buffalo was a big problem because high voltage was needed. Transformers were developed to overcome this difficulty. At Niagara, transformers would raise voltage so that power could be sent to Buffalo. In Buffalo, other transformers would lower the voltage so that the electricity could be used for commercial purposes. With this problem solved, a transmission system was erected to carry the electricity to Buffalo.

In August, 1895, generators in Power House Number One produced electricity for the Pittsburgh Reduction Company in Niagara Falls. At Niagara, demands for power soon increased. But the biggest day of all came in the following year. On November 16, 1896, a switch was thrown and current raced over the wires to Buffalo—just one minute after midnight.

Cannons booming in Buffalo announced the beginning of a new era for Niagara Falls as a power center. In the years that followed we shall see hydro-electric power change the small town by the river into a great industrial center. This is the subject of our next two chapters.

14. Industrial Niagara gains strength

A river gives life to a city

How important is the river to Niagara Falls?

Twenty miles north of Buffalo, the mighty Niagara River sweeps west and then turns to the north again on its way to Lake Ontario. In the elbow of this river is Niagara Falls, a fast-growing city of over 100,000 people. A good deal of the river rushes through tunnels and covered channels beneath the city and then slams through turbines to produce electric power. Heavy power lines stretch from the power plants out over the countryside, like fingers whose magic touch brings life to thousands of homes and factories.

Niagara Falls would become a ghost town if this river vanished. The great electric furnaces would go out. The factories now crowding the river bank would no longer turn out their products. The haze of smoke from a forest of smoke stacks would disappear, and so would the piercing smell of chemicals. The shining railroad tracks that curve through the city would begin to rust. The heavy traffic that now crawls over main streets would no longer carry people to work or to shopping centers. Thousands of people without jobs would leave the city and misery would become common for those who stayed. Without the river, there would be no Niagara Falls.

What was Niagara Falls like before power brought industries?

The river, remember, did not build this thriving city overnight. Before men really learned to put the river to work, Niagara Falls was a small village. In summer, barefoot children rolled hoops in the dusty village streets. On Saturdays, wagons, buggies, and saddle horses crowded hitching rails before stores and shops. And stables were as much a part of village homes as garages are today. Chickens and hogs, and sometimes cows, were still seen in backyards.

These were the horse and buggy days of industry, too. Factories still used the river's power in the same old way—to run clumsy millwheels. Although some of the river power was harnessed to make electricity in 1881, the electricity was used only for lighting.



A familiar fixture on Niagara's skyline.

But in these same horse and buggy days of the 1880's and 1890's, important discoveries were being made. Scientists found that electricity could do some wonderful things—things that started whole new chemical industries. They were also building new machines to stand up under the pounding of the river and to produce more electric power. These discoveries and machines meant future greatness for the little village by the Niagara River.

This chapter tells how industry changed a horse and buggy village into an industrial center. It is the story of the men who started industries in Niagara Falls. And it is the story of the industries themselves—how they got started, why they came to Niagara Falls, and how they grew beside the river. To really understand this story, it is important to remember that industry and power walked hand in hand. One helped the other. Neither power nor industry alone could have built Niagara Falls.

Electric power attracts electrochemical industries

What is the story of the early electrochemical industries?

The first was aluminum The first electrochemical industry in Niagara Falls began on August 26, 1895. On that summer day workmen threw switches at the Niagara Falls Power Company. Five thousand horsepower of electricity rushed through a maze of wires to the Pittsburgh Reduction Company. Within this small plant a group of men waited impatiently to throw switches to start the electric furnaces.

For days the men of Pittsburgh Reduction had prepared for this moment. They had checked and rechecked the rectangular pan-shaped furnaces, the wiring, the electrodes and the connections. And then they checked them again. Satisfied that all was ready, they poured purified aluminum ore into a furnace and dissolved it in cryolite, much as sugar is dissolved in water. Finally they threw the switches and sent electricity through the mixture of aluminum ore and cryolite. Then they watched and waited.

As they stood near the furnace, their thoughts drifted back nine years to 1886. They recalled the first few drops of aluminum

Charles M. Hall had made with electricity. Two years later, he had started his small five-man factory in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania then moved to Lockport for six months. They relived the troubles of those first years—failure to get large amounts of cheap electricity, break-downs of furnaces, poor sales. They remembered their decision to move to Niagara Falls where the Niagara Falls Power Company offered cheap electricity. Here Hall and his backers built a new plant. Now the day had arrived when they were ready to begin production.

On this August day in 1895, their dreams and hopes seemed to be coming true. As they watched aluminum being made, they felt the heat as electricity flowed through the mixture. They watched a crust form on top of the mixture where it was exposed to the air. In their minds, perhaps, they saw the aluminum separating from the cryolite and settling to the bottom of the pan-shaped furnace.

Finally, they were ready to tap the furnace. Workmen pulled the plug near the bottom and a bright silver thread of aluminum flowed into iron molds like a glistening string of silver beads. There was much handshaking and back slapping—the first aluminum had been made in Niagara Falls by the first customer of the Niagara Falls Power Company. The electrochemical industry in Niagara Falls had begun—on August 26, 1895.

Once started, the furnaces never stopped making aluminum until the carbon electrodes burned or the furnaces needed other repairs. Men kept adding aluminum ore and cryolite. And aluminum kept settling to the furnace bottom to be drawn off into molds. When it cooled, it was shipped to other factories to be made into the hundreds of items using aluminum. Day by day, men found new uses for aluminum and more furnaces went into operation. Within a year the company doubled production and built another plant.

Not only in Niagara Falls, but throughout the nation, aluminum plants sprang up. Men invested huge sums of money in the new light-weight metal. Aluminum production became so widespread that several companies joined in 1907 to form the Aluminum Company of America. Pittsburgh Reduction became part of this company, and the Niagara Falls plant became a unit in the vast works of the Aluminum Company of America.

Following World War II, the company went through another period of change. Some plants were closed and production shifted elsewhere. One of the plants closed was the Niagara Falls plant. In 1949, the first electrochemical industry in Niagara Falls moved from its early home by the Niagara River.

Dr. Edward Acheson Like that of aluminum, the story of the discovered and produced carborundum second electrochemical industry in Niagara Falls began in western Pennsylvania. In 1890, a young scientist worked in his laboratory in Monongahela, south of Pittsburgh. The young man was searching for a way to make a diamond-like material that would be harder than any natural grinding material. His name was Dr. Edward Acheson and he thought the way to make the new grinding material or abrasive was by using electricity.

By the time he was thirty-five, Dr. Acheson had seen much of electricity. He had worked with Thomas A. Edison in his laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey. He had traveled in Europe installing electric light plants. And when he decided to make his own way, he naturally turned to the thing he knew best—electricity.

After leaving Edison, Dr. Acheson raised what money he could and moved to Monongahela. To pay for his experiments, he planned to light homes and streets at night. During the day he would use the electricity his plant generated for experiments. On November 20, 1890, his small dynamo began sending electricity to the homes and stores of his customers.

But almost immediately he was in trouble. His small power company would fail unless he got money to make it larger. He had invested his own money and what money he could borrow, so the story goes, but this was not enough. The two local banks owned the gas-lighting company that supplied light to the village. And the banks were not eager for competition from electricity. So they turned down his plea for a loan. Nor could he interest village leaders in his plan for their town. Every attempt to get help failed. No person in authority seemed interested in his company or in experiments with electricity.

Dr. Acheson saw one chance open—to convince the people that electric street lights were better than gas lights. But before new electric lighting could be installed, the village leaders would have to be voted out of office and a new group elected. So he had handbills printed and paid boys to spread them about town, under doors, in open windows and hallways. The handbills pointed out the benefits of electricity and suggested that the only way for the villagers to enjoy electricity was to elect new leaders. Electricity won the election. The newly elected officers voted for electric lighting.

His company now safe, Dr. Acheson returned to his experiments and the search for a new abrasive. His experiments centered on his tiny electric furnace. He built this furnace by wrapping copper wire around a small iron bowl and putting a carbon rod, with

another wire attached to it, into the bowl. He connected these two wires to his dynamo.

In searching for the new abrasive, Acheson tried many mixtures in his electric furnace. None offered much promise. Then one day in 1891 he mixed powdered coke with clay and put it into his furnace. He put the carbon rod into the mixture and attached the wires. Then he turned on the electricity. The temperature in his small furnace reached several thousand degrees. When the mixture cooled, Acheson found small sparkling bits of green and black and purple material clinging to the carbon rod.

He scraped off the tiny flashing specks and placed them on the end of a pencil. He drew the pencil across a piece of glass. It cut the glass like a diamond. He then tried the new material on an oiled metal surface. It cut this also with no trouble. As a final test, he scratched the surface of his diamond ring—the hardest material known. Dr. Acheson had discovered an abrasive hard enough to cut diamonds. The new material, which he named “Carborundum,” was now ready for the world.

When he had enough Carborundum as samples, Acheson headed for New York City. One of his first stops was the shop of a diamond merchant. He proved the value of his abrasive by having a diamond cutter polish the scratch from his diamond ring. The amazed diamond cutter immediately ordered Carborundum—at \$880 a pound! Acheson made other visits in New York City and returned to Monongahela with more orders for Carborundum.

So began the commercial production of Carborundum. Acheson's first commercial furnace was four by ten inches in size and made a quarter-pound of Carborundum a day. The company built bigger and more efficient furnaces. Soon their output went to three pounds, then to twenty-five, and later to thirty pounds a day. But in spite of greater production, the company was losing money.

Acheson took on the task of finding new customers and cheaper ways of making Carborundum. For the next few years he traveled about the United States, seeking customers. He carted his Carborundum samples to industrial fairs and business meetings, always eager to show its value to industry. In 1894, he sailed to Europe and displayed his precious samples in industrial centers there. Upon his return, he heard about the new Niagara Falls Power Company, which was being built by the river. He went there, studied the location, and then returned to Monongahela, sure that a move to Niagara Falls would save money.

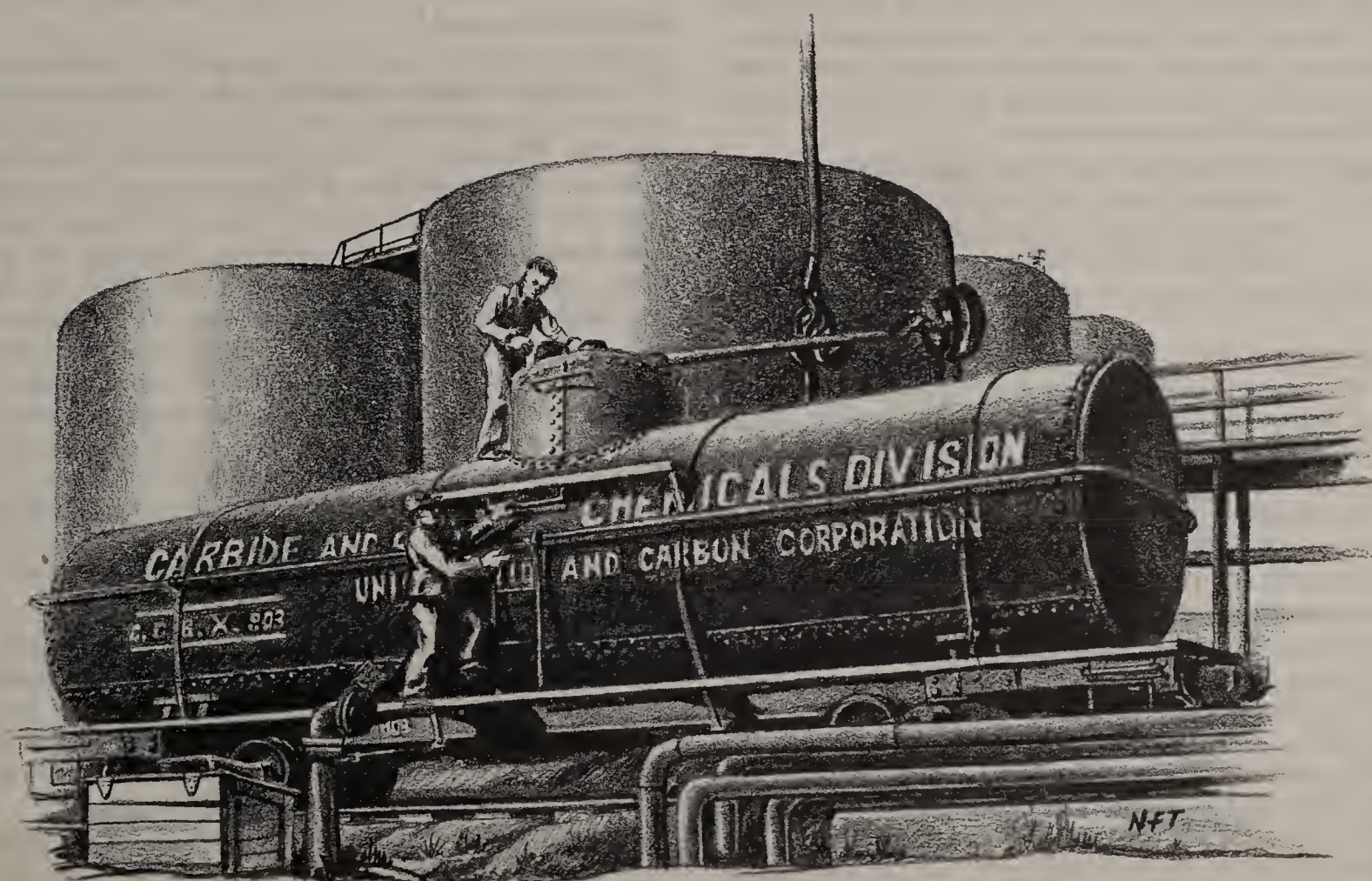
After listening to his arguments, his backers decided to pick up and move. They had faith in Acheson and the future of Carborun-

dum. They sold the Monongahela plant, borrowed money, and built a plant on Buffalo Avenue in Niagara Falls. By the fall of 1895, they were in production. And so the second electrochemical industry turned on its electric furnaces in Niagara Falls.

The company expanded rapidly in the following years. In 1900, four hundred people made \$350,000 worth of Carborundum. By 1920, the figures had jumped to two thousand workers and \$10,000,000 worth of Carborundum products. In 1953 6,673 workers made over \$82,000,000 worth of Carborundum products. Since then production has increased.

Aloxite is discovered The story of abrasive did not end with Carborundum. In 1899, Charles B. Jacobs discovered a process for making an abrasive from alumina, refined aluminum ore. Carborundum's research department developed the process for making Jacobs' aloxite. Soon the company offered the second man-made abrasive for sale.

As time went on, the company developed other products, including a special metal for atomic power. But the main product is still Carborundum in many shapes and sizes, from small wheels used to slit fountain pen points to the giant wheels used to grind logs into pulp for paper.



Dr. Acheson found a way to make graphite Carborundum was not the only important discovery made by Dr. Acheson. He also gets the credit for discovering another product that is especially important for electrochemical industries.

Following the usual way for making Carborundum, Acheson mixed coke, sand, sawdust, and salt in an electric furnace. For some reason, so the story goes, Dr. Acheson forgot about the furnace. The temperature rose to four thousand degrees and Carborundum was formed. The temperature continued to rise in the unwatched furnace. Inside the furnace, the Carborundum began to burn and pass off into gas. The only thing that remained when the furnace cooled was carbon and this had changed into pure graphite.

Acheson quickly carried on other experiments in making artificial graphite. In time he had a formula for graphite production—and the International Acheson Graphite Company was born. Graphite found immediate use in electrodes for electric furnaces and batteries in Niagara Falls and elsewhere.

The Carbide industry moved to Niagara Falls Another pioneer electrochemical industry seeking power in Niagara Falls was the Acetylene Heat, Light and Power Company, later part of the Union Carbide Corporation.

Like aluminum and Carborundum, it also had its beginning elsewhere.

In 1892, Thomas L. Willson of North Carolina was searching for a cheap way to make aluminum from clay. Willson discovered that a mixture of burnt lime (calcium) and coke heated in an electric furnace produced calcium carbide. Because he had failed to make aluminum, he threw the mixture out. He found out later, after a rain and a discarded lighted match, that calcium carbide gave off acetylene gas when in contact with water. When lighted, the gas burned with a soft and steady light.

Willson then helped form a company to produce calcium carbide. But carbide needed large amounts of electricity that was not available in North Carolina. So the company began looking around for power. In time, like many other companies, they decided upon Niagara Falls. In 1895, their plant arose on the farmland near the city limits. In 1896, smoke from the plant was pouring into the sky and drifting over fields and pastures about the city. Before long, farmers and others could recognize the tell-tale smoke and odor of the carbide plant. In 1898, the company was reorganized as the Union Carbide Company.

The company first began selling calcium carbide as a source of light. Company engineers even invented a new type of lamp that

used water and calcium carbide. The light from carbide lamps was much better than that of kerosene lamps. And when a highly-polished reflector was set behind the flame, it produced a brilliance that was a wonder to those who knew only candles and oil lamps.

Electricity, however, made an even better light. As electricity became more common, the company found other uses for acetylene gas. Mixed with oxygen, acetylene gas produces a flame hot enough to slice through metals. Today the pointed blue flame of acetylene torches is a common sight wherever the steel skeletons of new buildings reach into the sky, or wherever men work with steel girders.

What other electrochemical industries came as power increased?

The growth of power kept pace with incoming industries. More of the river's water rushed through tunnels and canals and pushed turbines to make more power. The Niagara Falls Power Company and the Hydraulic Power Company kept boosting power with turbines and generators. With more power available, other industries followed the example of Niagara's pioneer companies.

Olin Mathieson Corporation took root and developed In Saltville, Virginia, the Mathieson Alkali Works felt the pull of Niagara's cheap electric power. The Mathieson Company began an operation in Niagara Falls. Another company, the Castner Electrolytic Alkali Company, is also part of the Mathieson story. This company produced two basic chemicals from salt water. When electricity was sent through the salt water, the salt separated into sodium and chlorine gas. The sodium then mixed with water to make caustic soda and hydrogen gas. It was this caustic soda or lye that Castner Alkali wanted to sell. Caustic soda is a chemical much used in refining gasoline and in making rayon, textiles, plastics, soaps, and dyes.

From the chlorine that was formed in the process of making caustic soda, the Castner Alkali Company began making bleaching powder in 1896. Like caustic soda, chlorine has many uses in the chemical industry—in insecticides, disinfectants, weed killers, anti-freeze, paper, shellac, and textiles. To this day, chlorine is one of the important products of Niagara Falls.

In time the company began making other chemicals besides caustic soda, chlorine, and hydrogen. It now makes ammonia, sodium, and many other chemicals. One of its newest products is hydrazine, a chemical used in rocket fuels.

About 1917, the Castner Electrolytic Alkali Company and

another company became the Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation. Through the years it has continued to expand. Now it has seventy buildings spread over fifty-three acres and employs over a thousand people in Niagara Falls. The company has gradually reached out and taken over other chemical companies such as the Winchester Arms Corporation. It is now one of the largest corporations in the world. It has about one hundred and thirty-seven plants and offices throughout the world, making hundreds of products.

The Du Pont Company bought out the Niagara Electrochemical Company In the years following 1895, other electrochemical companies set up works in Niagara Falls. In 1896, the Niagara Electrochemical Company, forerunner of Du Pont, built a plant at the edge of Niagara Falls.

The company began in a four room apartment in Brooklyn in 1883. A German immigrant, Franz Roessler, worked in his tiny kitchen mixing and boiling and baking chemicals. Despite his neighbors' complaints about odors, he turned out a steady stream of chemicals from his kitchen laboratory.

In 1885, Jacob Hasslacher, agent for a German chemical company, approached Roessler with a plan for starting a company. A short time later, Roessler and Hasslacher opened a plant in New York City. Soon they faced the same old problem of getting enough electric power. A move was necessary. Niagara Falls was the best location, especially since the company could make metallic sodium from caustic soda made by Mathieson. Roessler and Hasslacher called the plant the Niagara Electrochemical Company.

During World War I, hatred of Germans forced the company to sell out to Americans. American owners expanded during and after the war. In time the company caught the eye of the giant E. I. du Pont de Nemours Corporation. In May, 1930, Du Pont took it over. And today it is the Electrochemicals Department of the Du Pont Company.

Many valuable chemicals come from this plant, including a basic chemical for making nylon. It also uses acetylene from the Union Carbide Company to make cleaning fluids, plastics, and other useful products.

The Oldbury Company went into production Crowding close on the heels of "R. and H." came the Oldbury Company from England, now the Oldbury Division of the Hooker Chemical Company. Oldbury produced white phosphorus, used in matches, and chemicals for the production of non-iron metals. To make their products better, the company made improvements in the electric furnace and the cell for producing caustic soda and chlorine.

Other types of industries used electric power

Electrochemical industries came to Niagara Falls to use electricity directly in making their products. But other industries came to use electricity only to run machines and to provide heat and light. Some of these companies used the river water directly in the same old way. The river turned mill-wheels which were connected to machines by a system of shafts and belts. They were usually customers of the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Company.

How did the International Paper Company fill its power need?

The International Paper Company was one of these. Unlike other mills on the raceway of the Hydraulic Power Company, International Paper had its own intake and wheel pits. The company, organized in 1898, took over a paper mill in Niagara Falls. When it began operating in 1898, the company made its own electricity with its own turbines. Niagara Falls was fertile ground and the company grew rapidly. Spreading out, it took over other companies making the same products, thus following the pattern of other successful corporations.

In time International Paper was a large corporation that even controlled the forests that provided wood for pulp. Logs from their camps in Michigan were shipped to Grand Island on barges and then dumped into the river. From there, nimble loggers rode the logs down river to the mill site near the upper river. After a time, the company found it cheaper to have pulp wood shipped to the plant rather than to cut their own. The day of the log runs is past. The river no longer carries the flood of logs, and the odor of raw timber drifts no more over the river banks.

How did Moore Business Forms grow into a large company?

A good customer of International Paper was a local company which started in 1883. The paper bought from International Paper was used to make a new type of sales book invented by John R. Carter. Carter, Samuel J. Moore, and four other men organized a company in 1882 and began operations in Canada. Cheap power drew them in 1883 to Niagara Falls, then a village of muddy streets hugging the Niagara River. In the winter they opened for business as Carter and Company.

The road to success for the little company was not smooth. The hoped-for flood of profits turned out to be a trickle that was

soon spent for operating costs. Some of the founders withdrew from the company, discouraged by their losses. But Moore put new life into the company and installed machines that saved time and money. Under his control, the company began to prosper.

Following the usual pattern of growth, the company gradually took over other companies in the same business. They bought out the Crume and Sefton Manufacturing Company of Ohio, and the company was reorganized as Carter and Crume, makers of sales books and registers. In the following years the company took over other companies making similar products.

But trouble was fast approaching. In 1903, a battle started that nearly wrecked the company. Carter-Crume and a competitor, the American Salesbook Company, made sales books that were much alike. American Sales Book took Carter-Crume to court, claiming Carter-Crume was copying its sales book. A long and costly legal battle followed which neither side could win. In the end, they shook hands and formed one company. The new company, called American Sales Book, had its head offices in Elmira, New York.

In 1934, the company moved its headquarters to Niagara Falls. From here it continued to expand taking over more companies. In 1945 all the companies under control of the American Sales Book Company were reorganized into Moore Business Forms, Inc. By the 1950's, Moore Business Forms had over twenty plants and three hundred sales offices in Canada and the United States. The Niagara Falls area plants alone employ more than 2,000 people.

What is the background of the National Biscuit Company?

Another industry to use Niagara's power to run machines and produce heat and light is the National Biscuit Company. This company had its beginning with a wistful old gentleman from Nebraska.

By the time he reached the age of fifty, Henry D. Perky could look back upon a long list of failures—as a newspaper man, a teacher, a lawyer, and an inventor. Perky was visiting in Nebraska when he got his big idea. Because he had stomach trouble, he asked for something easily digestible for breakfast. His hostess, following his wishes, served him a breakfast of boiled wheat. Perky sampled the boiled wheat, half expecting stomach trouble. But nothing happened. He did not feel the slightest bit of distress.

The thought struck him that here was an idea that could make his fortune. If this food could help him, perhaps others would benefit from it also. In 1891 he began experimenting with wheat and later

built a shredding machine. Getting the needed supplies and equipment on credit, Perky started his "Cereal Machine Company" to make his new breakfast food.

Things did not go too well in Nebraska, so he moved to Colorado. But his new food did not sell there either. Big city people seemed to like his new breakfast food. And there were more people in the cities and the chances of finding people who liked his wheat cereal were better. So Perky boarded a train and headed for Worcester, Massachusetts.

But all did not go well there, in spite of his many customers. There was not enough electric power available for his rapidly expanding business. Like so many others, Perky heard about the cheap power in Niagara Falls and decided his fortune rested in the city by the river. His move, however, could not be made until he raised money for a new plant. Perky interested business men in Niagara Falls and Buffalo in his plans. His long list of past failures made investors somewhat doubtful and they checked his company carefully. In the end he was so successful in raising money that the hard and practical businessmen who owned part of his company took its management out of his hands.

But Perky had one more idea that his business partners listened to and approved. Perky wanted to build a plant in Niagara Falls that would attract visitors. He saw the new plant as a show-place where he could invite the public to see shredded wheat biscuits made; of course, he hoped to attract more customers, too.

And so the plant was built. It was bright and airy. It was even air-conditioned. Spotlessly clean guides took visitors through the buildings. Cleanliness and courtesy impressed them. The odor of baking biscuits had a mouth-watering effect. The famous tour ended with the visitors sitting in a scrubbed and polished dining room, being served Shredded Wheat by white-uniformed girls. Perky's public tours were a huge success.

The demand for Shredded Wheat became so great that the company built a second plant on Erie Avenue. Later it built plants in Canada and England. The company also changed its name from the "Natural Food Company" to "The Shredded Wheat Company." In 1904, Perky sold his interests in the company; two years later, he died. But the company continued to grow. In 1928 the National Biscuit Company bought the company. It closed the Buffalo Avenue plant and operated only the Erie Avenue plant. There the company's buildings still tower over Erie Avenue, a monument to the gentleman from Nebraska.

Industrial growth continues

After the early rush of companies seeking power, business in Niagara Falls leveled off. It did not spurt ahead again until 1917. In that year World War I began, causing a huge demand for chemicals and other products. Industrial growth between 1900 and 1917 was slow. However, several companies, later important leaders in Niagara Falls, started operating during that time.

What companies opened up between 1900 and World War I?

The Hooker Electrochemical Company was built in 1905

One such company was the Hooker Electrochemical Company. The men who founded other companies had been inventors; the man who built Hooker was a genius of another sort. Elon Huntington Hooker was a well-trained engineer. Soon after he graduated from college, Governor Theodore Roosevelt of New York appointed him Deputy Superintendent of Public Works. His job of enlarging the Barge Canal brought him into contact with many businessmen. Soon he had a reputation for getting things done well.

Hooker's genius for business attracted attention among investors in New York City. Some friends asked him to invest their money for them. He did well at this sort of thing. Finally, in 1901, he resigned his job with the state and was vice-president of the Development Company of America. This new company invested money in other companies that developed natural resources. Hooker was successful enough to convince other wealthy men that he could make money for them. In 1903 he started the Development and Funding Company to invest money in other companies with a prosperous future.

Something else that happened in 1903 seemed unimportant at the time, but it later turned out to be the foundation of the Hooker Company. Two inventors built a new type of cell for making caustic soda and chlorine from salt water. The inventors, needing money, went to the Development and Funding Company. The cell looked promising and Hooker invested his company's money in it. And he too, decided upon Niagara Falls as the place to build a plant.

In the spring of 1905, the Development and Funding Company began building a plant in a peach orchard outside Niagara Falls. In the beginning the company had money troubles. But the growing chemical industry in the United States needed large amounts of chlorine and caustic soda. In 1909, the company was reorganized

and renamed the Hooker Chemical Company. And later the old Development and Funding Company was dissolved.

With the outbreak of World War I, the company swung into war work, making explosives and other chemicals. Expansion continued after the war. The company gradually began producing other materials. By the 1960's it was making over a hundred chemicals, all using caustic soda, chlorine, or hydrogen. Its two thousand employees were producing over \$40,000,000 worth of chemicals each year.

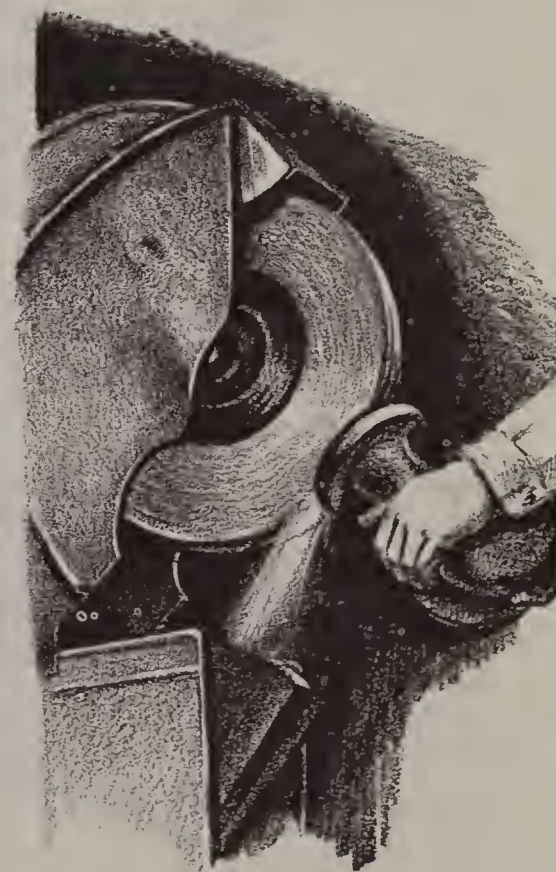
Two world wars helped the Niagara Alkali Company to grow

Another company that began in the early 1900's was the Niagara Alkali Company, now the Niagara Alkali Division of Hooker Chemical. It also began with a cell for producing caustic soda and chlorine. Isaiah L.

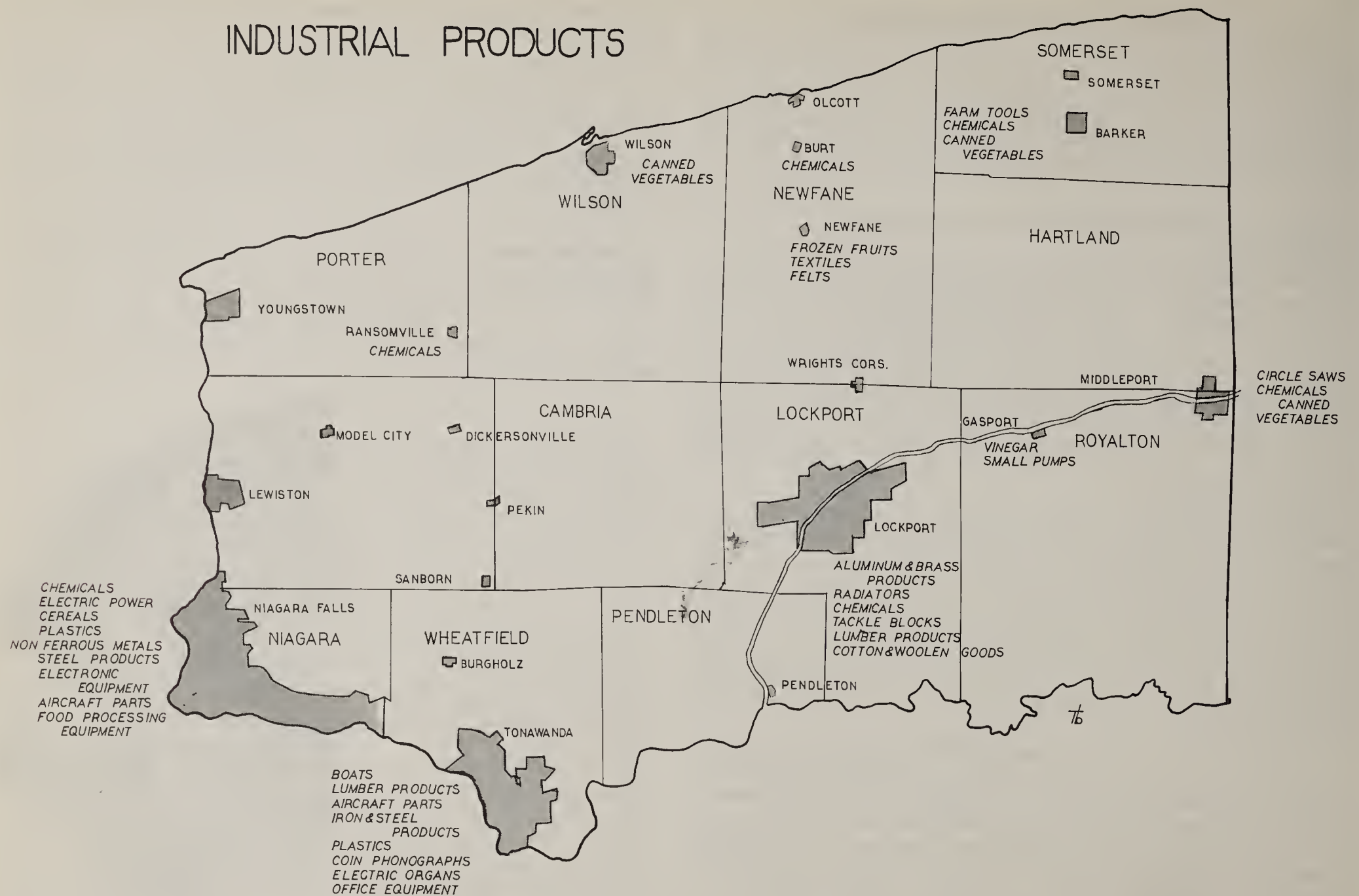
Roberts invented the cell and formed the Roberts Chemical Company to put it to use.

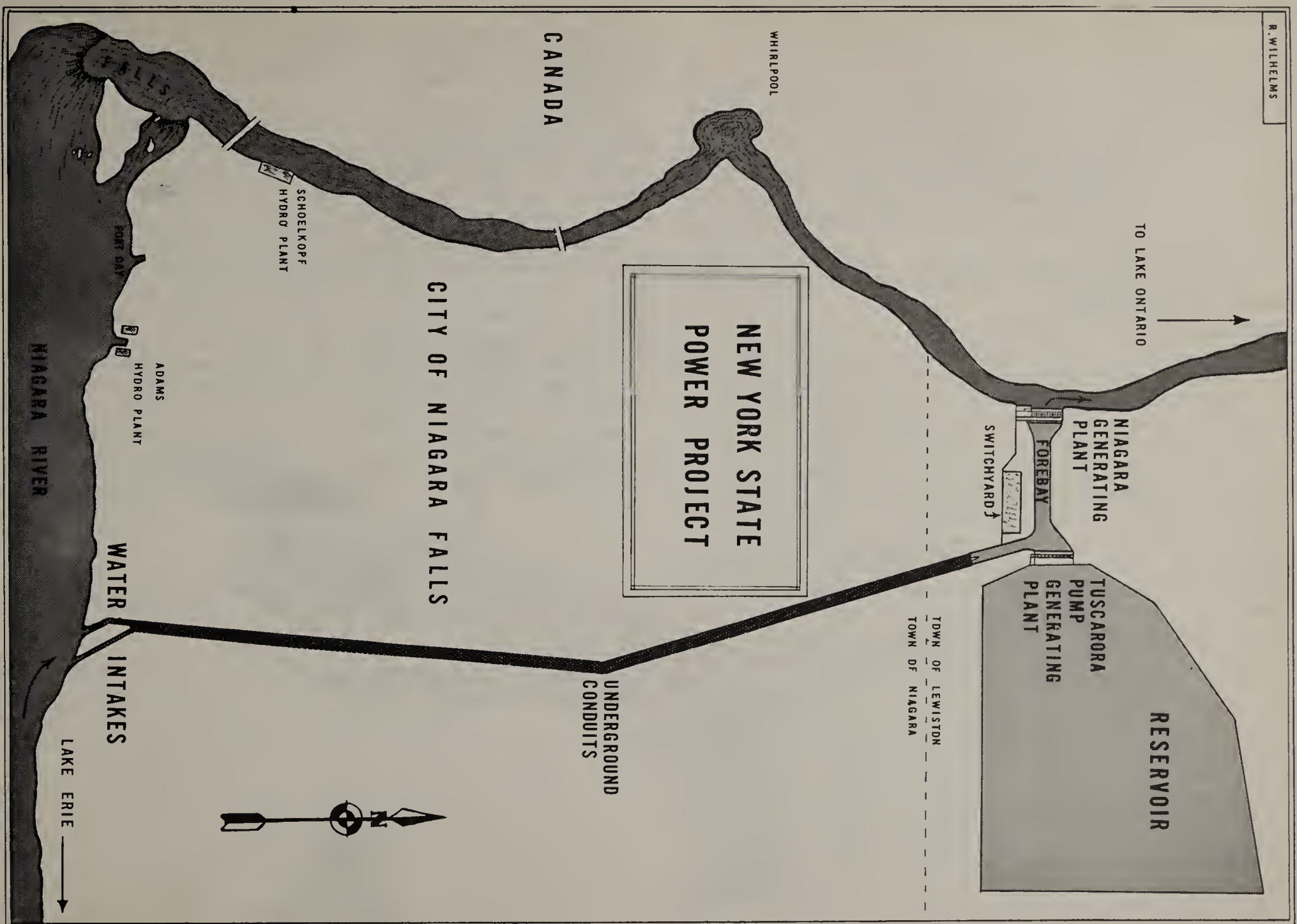
The Roberts Chemical Company later sold to Germans interested in making chemicals in the United States. The Germans improved the Roberts cell and made other changes in the company. They also renamed it the Niagara Alkali Company. In the face of anti-German feeling during World War I, the company transferred control to Americans as Roessler and Hasslacher had done.

World War I helped the Niagara Alkali Company to expand. Later, during the depression, business slowed. World War II brought another spurt of growth. By the mid-1950's the company employed about five hundred people.



INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS





Niagara Falls industries help each other

How is this possible?

One of the important facts in the industrial growth of Niagara Falls has been the need of one company for the products of the others. Caustic soda made by Mathieson was used by Roessler and Hasslacher to make their metallic sodium. Mathieson, in turn, used products made by other companies. Moore Business Forms is still a good customer of International Paper. This depending upon one another's products is well illustrated in the growth of the Union Carbide Corporation.

Why is the Union Carbide Corporation a good example of business co-operation?

The Union Carbide Corporation began as the Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation with three companies in 1917. The first was the Union Carbide Company, makers of acetylene gas. Later the Electro-Metallurgical Company was formed to develop processes discovered by Union Carbide. It also made alloys—a mixture of two or more metals. One of these alloys was fine stainless steel. In 1910, National Carbon, the third member, moved to Niagara Falls to make carbon electrodes, so necessary in electro-chemical industries. Its chief customers were Union Carbide and Electro-Metallurgical.

These three companies, already working closely together, joined with two other companies to form the Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation. The other two were Prest-O-Lite, which made acetylene gas from the calcium carbide made by Union Carbide, and Linde Air Products, which supplied oxygen for acetylene torches and other cutting tools using acetylene gas. Each of these five companies used products made by the others.

Through the years, other companies whose products were useful to Union Carbide and Carbon joined the corporation. In 1920, Carbide and Carbon Chemicals, users of acetylene gas, became part of Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation. In 1925, the Niacet (shortened name for Niagara Acetylene) Chemical Corporation joined the others. Acheson Graphite followed in 1928. Then came Republic Carbon and, later, the Union Carbide Corporation operated the Vanadium Company, maker of alloys. Over the years the corporation has gone through mergers and reorganizations, until the present Union Carbide Corporation emerged.

We have seen how five companies making products needed by other companies joined to form the Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation in 1917. And we have also seen the corporation grow

by adding other companies through the years. This corporation is not the only example of companies growing together. But it is a good example. This helping of one another is an important thing to remember about Niagara Falls industry.

In the past few pages, we have tried to give brief histories of some of the important companies in Niagara Falls. These are not the only important industries. But they do give a picture of how industry in Niagara Falls developed. The complete story of every industry — of Bell Airo-space, Stauffer Chemical, and many others — would take several books the size of this one.

However, before we leave the story of industry, we ought to mention one of the great industries that grew up in Niagara Falls that does not have the usual production line. This is the chemical research industry. This area probably employs more research chemists than any other area in the nation and it produces some of the world's important products and processes. Some of the important laboratories are Union Carbide Metals, Hooker Research Center, Speer Carbon Company, and the E. I. Du Pont de Nemours.

So far we have told only the story of industry since 1895. It is now time to turn to power again, for without power there would have been little industry.

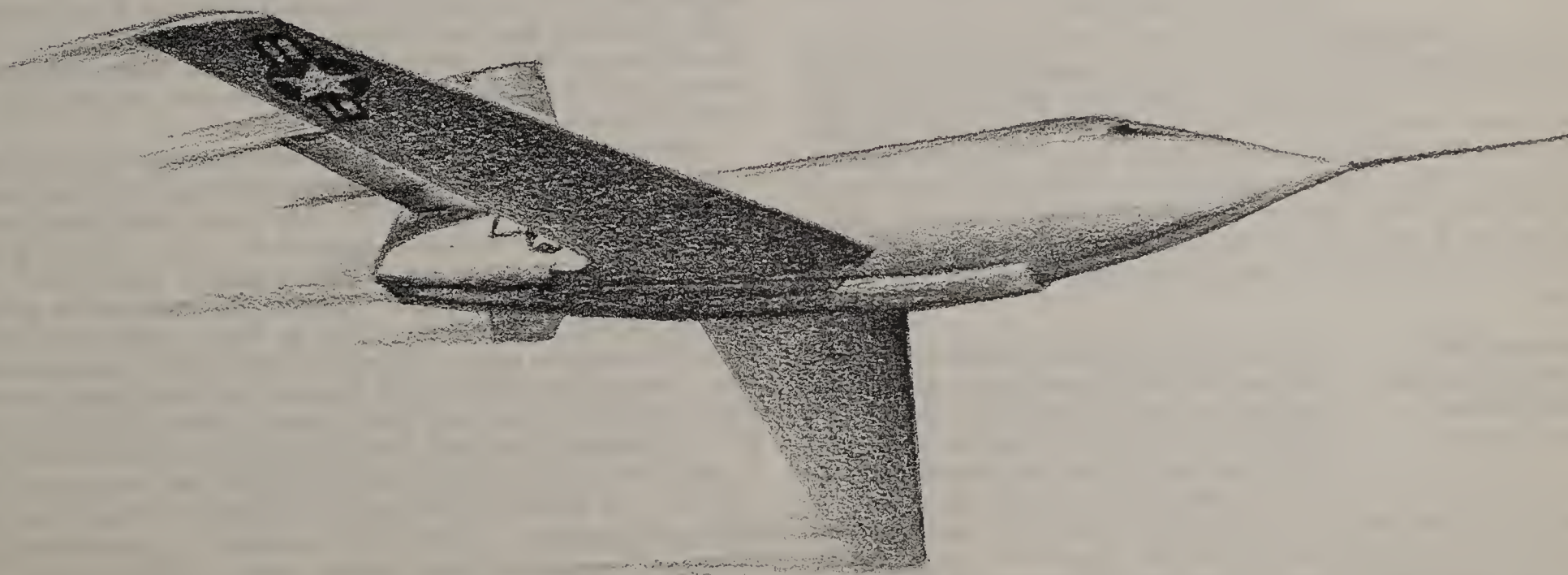


15. Man finds new ways to increase Niagara's power output

The final conquest of Niagara had to wait for the coming of bigger and better machines—machines that could take the smashing power of tons of water falling hundreds of feet. The old mill-wheels were useless against such power. It took time to develop new machines. This is why Lockport, rather than Niagara Falls, became an early power center. Mill-wheels at Lockport could handle surplus Erie Canal water and the quieter waters of Eighteen Mile Creek.

But through the years more and more of Niagara was brought under control. In the 1870's and 1880's, better machines gave men like Horace Day and Thomas Evershed the idea that the power of the Niagara River could be used still further. By 1895, a good part of the river was doing man's work. Now the power center began to shift from Lockport to Niagara Falls. World War I brought still more control. In 1958, with more knowledge and newer machines as weapons, the final campaign for the conquest of Niagara opened. And in 1961 the last battle was won. Niagara was chained.

Those final battles from 1895 to 1961 make up this chapter's story.



An important product of Niagara Falls is aircraft parts.

The conquest begins

What were some early steps to chain the river?

The Niagara Power Company stepped up output

Two companies produced power in 1895—the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Company and the new Niagara Falls Power Company. Industries came to the city to take advantage of this power. Soon industries wanted more power. But it did not pay to make more power available than industry wanted. When this happened, power companies went bankrupt—as Horace Day could well testify. Usually power would spurt ahead, wait for industry to catch up, and then spurt ahead again. When industry did catch up, power men were eager to start new projects that would use still more of the river's water to produce power.

Further increases in power were challenged

The year 1900 was such a time—a time when power men fought to develop needed power. But fight as they might for power, their way was blocked by a group of hard and determined people.

All the trouble began over water. Water was the source of power to make electricity. Any increase of power meant more water taken from the river. Men interested in power were quite willing to take all the water in the upper river and leave none to run over the falls. But with nature lovers it was a different story. They saw the falls as a natural wonder. They looked upon any increase in water taken from the river as a disaster. Naturally, power men and nature lovers looked at each other as enemies. With two groups feeling so strongly about the river, a knock-down drag-out fight was bound to come.

The Burton Bill limited the amount of water power from the river

Around 1900 the battle opened on several fronts. Opposing forces fought in Canada, England, and the United States, the nations controlling the river. Wherever they met, it was not long before arguments and insults and threats followed. The group trying to save the waterfalls fought hard and long. They hammered away at Congress with demands for water control. At last the lawmakers weakened. In 1906 they passed the Burton Bill limiting the amount of water that could be taken from the river. Power men threw up their hands in disgust. They were sure that misguided nature lovers had halted progress.

The Boundary Waters Treaty brought more control

The treaty set up a commission to determine how much water could be taken from the river without spoiling its natural beauty. For a time it looked as if there would be no more power for industrial growth. Many gloomy power men said that the industrial city of Niagara Falls had reached its limit. As they saw it: "No more power—no more growth."

World War I created a need for more power

Then came World War I. The United States asked for more production. And Niagara Falls turned out a flood of war goods—Carborundum, aluminum, carbides, and other chemicals and metals. Finally, plants reached a point where they could not increase production without more power. The cry for more power was heard in Congress.

The time was now ripe for the government to take a hand, and it sent a commission to look over the power problem and make suggestions. The commission urged the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power Company and the Niagara Falls Power Company to join. The larger and more efficient company could then produce more power. In 1918 the change was made. The new company took the name "Niagara Falls Power Company."

Increased efficiency brought increased power. But still more power was needed. The War Department asked for 100,000 more horsepower of electricity. To get this much power, the Niagara Falls Power Company had to enlarge its canal. This took more river water. Because it was wartime, nature lovers went along with the government's request. Besides, the government said the increase would be temporary. But in March, 1921, the Federal Power Commission gave the Niagara Falls Power Company a fifty-year lease on the water rights granted in 1918. Also about this time a pressure tunnel was built to supply water to the high bank for more power. This was a heavy blow to those who were fighting to save the beauty of the waterfalls. But the power men were pleased. They boosted power output to 452,000 horsepower in 1924.

Efficient operation of merged companies supplied more power

Since 1924, a number of power companies have joined together or "merged." By merging, companies reduced operating costs and cut down the inefficiency that resulted when several companies supplied the same area. During this time, the Niagara Falls Power Company joined a state-wide corporation,

although still operating under its own name. This period of mergers reached its peak in 1950 when the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation took shape. The Niagara Falls Power Company became part of this giant, and dropped the name Niagara Falls Power Company. It was re-named the Niagara Mohawk Power Company.

Niagara is finally conquered

How did this come about?

The formation of Niagara Mohawk did not end power development. In the 1950's, the United States and Canada made another treaty to develop more power for both nations from Niagara. The two nations worked out a plan to use more water and still save the beauty of the falls.

Some people feared that it would take all the water in the river to produce the power the new plant would generate. But that problem was solved. At night much of the water in the upper river would be used, some to run the generators and the rest to fill a huge man-made lake or reservoir. At night, of course, only a thin sheet of water would tumble over the falls. During the day, the generating plant would cut down its use of river water. Using some river water and all the reservoir water, the generators could still operate steadily at top speed. Under this plan, visitors during the day could still marvel at the wonders of the waterfalls and yet industry would have more power.

Private business tried to get the right to develop power The plan was a good one. But disagreement over who should carry it out nearly wrecked it. Private businessmen wanted to develop and control the power, but others believed

the State of New York should do it. The battle between those who wanted private power and those who wanted public power continued for years. Private industry fought public development with all the wealth and influence at hand. And for a time victory seemed within their grasp. But a hard-fighting group of men in Congress and in New York State blocked action by private businessmen.

New York State Power Authority developed Niagara Finally, a power disaster forced Congress to make a decision. In 1958, part of the Niagara Mohawk Power Station was destroyed by a huge rock slide. The chief source of power in Niagara Falls was all but gone. Action had to be taken to relieve the power shortage. Since something had to be done, Congress finally gave the New York State Power Authority the right to develop the power allotted to the United States by the treaty with Canada.

Legal battles slowed construction Public power's road now seemed clear. But the Power Authority, headed by Robert Moses, ran into a tough fight with Niagara Falls and Lewiston over how the water from the upper river should be carried to the reservoir and generators at Lewiston. The Power Authority wanted open canals through the city of Niagara Falls. Officials were opposed to having their city chopped up by open ditches. And naturally, the people of Niagara Falls protested against the dangers to children and the traffic jams that would result.

This battle the city won. The Power Authority agreed to build two concrete tunnels, or conduits, in deep ditches and then to cover them with earth. When the job was finished, there would be no sign of the conduits. Instead, parks and playgrounds would mark their underground route from the upper river to the Lewiston generators.

Indians fought to keep their land While this battle was going on, the Power Authority ran into more trouble, this time with the Tuscarora Indians. The reservoir which would feed water through the turbines during the day was to be built partly on the Tuscarora Reservation. But the Indians refused to sell their land. The Power Authority took them to court. The Power Authority won the first round and began surveying and clearing Indian land. The sheriff had to be called out to protect workers on the reservation from angry Indians.

Most people thought the Power Authority would win in the end. But in the second round, the Indians left court victorious. They forced the Power Authority to move off the reservation and to repair any damage done by the workers. Rather than hold up construction any longer, the Power Authority started building a smaller reservoir. But the final round was yet to be won.

In 1960, the Power Authority pressed a court battle for part of the Tuscarora Reservation. The Power Authority argued that with a smaller reservoir, it would have to cut down its expected output of electricity. Robert Moses and the Power Authority won the final court battle, and expanded the reservoir and increased power. And the Indians, as so many times in American history, lost part of their land to the whitemen.

The Authority overcame their legal troubles The Power Authority's legal battles were not yet ended. Home owners refused to give up their homes to make way for the project. Niagara Falls and Lewiston wanted the right to tax the Power Authority to make up for the loss of taxes resulting from the destroyed Niagara Mohawk Power Plant. Tl

Authority fought successfully to clear away these difficulties. It won the right to remove buildings for a right of way, and to be free of taxation as a public non-profit organization.

How did construction of the Niagara Power Project progress?

The land was prepared In January, 1958, the construction of one of the world's greatest hydro-electric power projects began. First came the surveyors measuring and laying out roads, bridges, conduits, and a reservoir. Sheds and other buildings sprang up about the area to shelter machines and tools, and to serve as offices. And everywhere steel-helmeted and muddy-booted men, browned by sun and wind, swarmed about. Driving, hauling, pounding, cutting, heaving, sawing, shoveling—and sometimes dying—they built this great monument to man and his hopes for the future.

Housemovers came, punched holes in foundation walls, slipped beams under houses, and lifted them onto wheeled platforms to be moved to other sites. The huge swinging weights of wrecking cranes battered buildings to rubble. Giant mechanical shovels scooped up tons of earth and rubble and dumped their loads into dozens of monster trucks that rumbled through the city. Bulldozers roared night and day, ripping out trees, tearing up brush, and pushing, piling, and leveling.

Work went on at many places at the same time. Throughout Niagara Falls the earth trembled as the trenches were blasted from bed rock for the conduits. Workmen—digging, blasting, scooping and dumping—slowly dug two huge trenches across the city, turning up ugly clay and rock. Sometimes these trenches were over eighty feet deep and forty feet wide. They stretched from the upper river to Lewiston where the generators were installed.

Work went on day and night. After dark, strings of powerful lights turned night into day. Near Lewiston, workmen tore off the face of the three hundred foot cliff. They molded it to wear a concrete mask of turbine pits and water shafts. They built a temporary steel bridge out from the cliff face. Small trains ran out on the bridge, carrying hoppers of concrete. A crane lifted the hoppers from the train and lowered them to the steel forms on the cliff face. Into these, men dumped the concrete. Nearby, stone crushers and a cement mixer fed oceans of concrete into the hoppers.

South from Lewiston, at Niagara Falls, more changes were taking place. On Goat Island and in Prospect Park, men operated

other bulldozers, cranes, and trucks, building new roads and bridges. And toward the east, along the upper river from the Grand Island Bridge to Prospect Park, buildings disappeared to make way for a park. Huge trucks dumped countless tons of rock into the river for the foundation of part of the Niagara Parkway, that runs along the river from the Grand Island Bridge to Lake Ontario.

Completion spurred industrial growth Some people wondered, while the city lay ripped and torn, if chaining the river was worth the trouble. But in October, 1959, they got an idea of the gift the river had given them. Robert Moses, Chairman of the Power Authority, told how the new low-cost power would be used. Two hundred thousand kilowatts would go to local industries. These industries, in turn, would spend one hundred seventy million dollars on new buildings and equipment. This would create 3100 new jobs besides providing temporary construction jobs.

Moses also listed the plants that would be using more electric power. According to the report, the Hooker Chemical Corporation had the biggest plans for expansion. The Hooker corporation asked for and got 55,000 kilowatts of electricity. Hooker announced a fifty million dollar expansion program. Other local industries were high on the list of power users; Carborundum would use 29,000 kilowatts, Pittsburg Metallurgical 28,000, and Great Lakes Carbon 13,000.

Not all the companies that asked for power increases got them. If they wanted more power, they had to take it in blocks of 5000 kilowatts or more and use it before 1962. Among those turned down by the Power Authority were Du Pont, International Paper, and the National Biscuit Company. The tremendous increase in power brought new industrial growth. And as industry grew, a steady stream of people flowed into the area.

The conquest of Niagara has come. Press a few buttons and the river nearly stops flowing. Press other buttons and the river plunges into the gorge with all its old wondrous beauty. The dreams of Joncaire, Augustus Porter, Horace Day, Jacob Schoellkopf, Robert Moses, and others have come true. The mighty Niagara River has been made to do the work of man.

Now it seems that Niagara has reached the limits of power development; because no more water can be taken from the river. But it is possible for men to build new machines to use the river more efficiently, as they have done so often in the past.

Your History Workshop

Words and terms you should know

subsistence farming	temperance	aloxite
dismal	tail water	carbide
leach	mill-race	chlorine
black salts	head	conduits
fodder	tail-race	reservoir
wheat midge	hydraulic canal	lease
	alternating current	
	Carborundum	

Where is it on the map?

Erie County	Chautauqua County	Monongahela
Cattaraugus County	Bath Island	

Who's Who in history?

Edward Acheson	Jacob Hasslacher	Elon Hooker
Charles Jacobs	Samuel Moore	Isaiah Roberts
Thomas Willson	John R. Carter	Robert Moses
Franz Roessler	Henry Perky	

How carefully did you read?

1. What were pioneer farms like?
2. What effect did the temperance movement have upon Niagara's orchards?
3. How does today's corn production compare with that of 1849?
4. Why is Niagara County called the "Orchard of New York"?
5. Today farming is scientific. What agencies and specialists help farmers grow better crops?
6. How did Joncaire harness waterpower for his sawmill?
7. What were some of Manchester's industries just before and after the War of 1812?
8. What effect did the Erie Canal have upon Niagara? the Tonawandas? Lockport?
9. What was Thomas Evershed's plan to improve Niagara's power output?
10. How was hydro-electric power sent to Buffalo?
11. Before industrialization, how did Niagara Falls appear to a visitor?
12. How do Niagara Falls industries help each other?
13. What was the purpose of the 1906 Burton Bill? the Boundary Waters Treaty?
14. What effect did World War I have upon Niagara Falls?
15. What role did the New York State Power Authority play in development of Niagara's power?
16. How has the power project affected the industrial growth of Niagara County?

Activities to help you understand Part V

1. *The Story of Electro-chemical Industries at Niagara Falls.*

Complete the following chart.

Name of Industry	Founder	Products	Other Interesting Facts
Pittsburgh Re- duction Company	Charles Hall	Aluminum	Became part of the Aluminum Company of America. Is no longer located in Niagara Falls.

2. Make a bar graph which shows the production in recent years of bushels of oats, barley, rye, and buckwheat.
3. What fruits does Niagara region produce? Make a chart which shows the main fruits and the varieties of each.
4. Make a pictorial map of New York State which shows the location of either the fruit- or grain-growing areas.
5. Construct a miniature water-wheel and demonstrate its operation to your classmates. Include an explanation of a mill-race.
6. On an answer sheet you have prepared for this exercise, write the letters of the *Descriptions* after the numbers which correspond to the *Names*. Some may be used more than once.

Names

1. John Bartram
2. Nathan Comstock
3. J. S. Woodward
4. B. Wheaton Clark
5. Chaubert Joncaire
6. Augustus Porter
7. Darius Comstock
8. Lewis Payne
9. Lyman Spaulding
10. William Marcy

Descriptions

- A. Began the conquest of Niagara with a mill-race
- B. Botanist who wrote of Niagara's fruits in 1740
- C. Second owner of land along the canal at Lockport
- D. Started veneer and plywood industry in Lockport
- E. Built a flour-mill which used water-power from the Niagara Hydraulic Company
- F. Bought the Hydraulic Canal from Horace Day
- G. Started cotton and wool batting industry in Lockport
- H. Took over Niagara Hydraulic Canal Company from Caleb Woodhall
- I. First to suggest arsenate of lead to control orchard insects
- J. First to bid for water rights at Lockport

11. T. P. Baily
 12. W. S. Levan
 13. Stephen Allen
 14. Horace Day
 15. Charles Gaskill
 16. Jacob Schoellkopf
 17. Thomas Evershed
 18. George Westinghouse
- K. Founded Manchester; controlled portage, built a mill-race at Niagara
 - L. Planned to develop Niagara power by having large tunnel beneath the city
 - M. Created the "Niagara" grape
 - N. Built first steam sawmill in Tonawanda
 - O. Vice-president and treasurer of Niagara Hydraulic Company
 - P. Built alternating current generator to transmit electricity to Buffalo
 - Q. Founded, with Washington Hunt, the Lockport Hydraulic Company to develop the town's power
 - R. Started the second apple orchard in Niagara County
7. Many crops and domestic animals are found in Niagara County. Through the years crops and animals have increased or decreased in number. Indicate this and the reason(s) by completing the following chart:
 8. How did Niagara Falls make use of its water for power? Explain this by sketching the layout of and relationships among the falls, upper and lower rivers, high bank, basin, mill- and tail-races, and hydraulic canal.
 9. Write a brief account of the hydraulic canal at Niagara Falls and the companies which helped to develop it.
 10. Which of the many Niagara County industrial companies interests you? Write to the company of your choice and search the library for illustrations, materials and information. Use these to write a brief history. Include whatever pictures, charts, graphs, and other visual aids you feel will help to tell the story.
 11. Make a poster advertising Niagara Falls electric power.
 12. If you have visited an industry in Niagara County, ask your teacher to let you describe it to the class.
 13. With your teacher and classmates, survey the possibility of a trip to one of the community's industries.
 14. Draw an outline of New York State. On it show by pictures and drawings the important events in the harnessing of Niagara Falls' power.
 15. Prepare a floor talk on one of the men in Part V. Point out how he contributed to the county's economic growth.
 16. Write a dialogue between Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse over whether alternating or direct current would better transmit electricity from the Falls to Buffalo. Before you begin, review proper use of quotation marks.

Products	Animals	Have	Have	Reasons
		Increased	Decreased	
wheat				
corn				
oats				
alfalfa				
grapes				
peas				
cabbage				
	horses			
	hogs			
	sheep			
	poultry			

Part VI

NIAGARA EXCITES MAN'S IMAGINATION

16. Men Challenge Niagara

Man Meets the Challenge

Hinan killed the serpent of the falls Thousands of years ago, a huge snake lived in the swirling waters deep beneath the great Falls of Ongiara. This serpent was an evil spirit who spread much sickness among the Indians. Many people died. Nothing the Indians could do would free them from his horrible spell.

Finally they appealed to the great god of clouds and rain. This was Hinan, who lived among the thundering waters of the cataract itself. He listened to their prayers, and answered. Waiting carefully for the serpent to show itself, Hinan stood poised with his fiery bolts of lightning.

Suddenly the serpent rose out of the depths of the water. Quickly Hinan hurled a bolt of lightning at the evil one. Mortally wounded, the serpent twisted and turned, trying to escape down the gorge. But Hinan was too powerful. Again and again, swift flashes of lightning pierced the serpent's skin. In the pains of death, his great body and tail lashed the walls of the gorge. That is why the rock walls are so scarred and twisted today.

Thus did the Indians' story teller explain one part of the great work of nature that we call Niagara Falls.

What the Indian legends tell us The legend of Hinan and the serpent tells us a great deal about the early people of this region. It shows us, first, that the Indians believed in spirits, and second, that these spirits were of two kinds—good and evil. Third it tells us that these spirits played a part in the lives of the people, and, finally, that the Indians asked for help from the spirits.

All of these things we learn from the legend. Wherever primitive people live in the world, we find ideas such as these about things they cannot explain in any other way. Where we use our scientific knowledge to explain disease, the natural world, and other things, these primitive people use their legends.

Another common practice of primitive people is that of making sacrifices to please their gods. These sacrifices are of different kinds. They may be of food, or of animals, or of humans. Each one is a kind of offering, or tribute, to the gods. Legends often arose from this custom.

Lelawala dwelt in the mist The tale of Lelawala, the beautiful Maid of the Mist, is one of these. In order to make their chief spirit, the Great Manitou,

happy, the Indians sacrificed the most beautiful maiden of the tribe each year. A white canoe, filled with fruits and decorated with flowers, was made ready. The chosen maiden then paddled the canoe out into the rapids above the falls and was carried over to her death.

One year the Indians chose Lelawala, daughter of the great Seneca chief, Eagle Eye. He was very sad at the thought of losing his daughter. Yet it was an honor to be chosen, and he could not prevent her death. On the day of the sacrifice, he stood by the shore waiting for the white canoe to appear.

Soon it came, with Lelawala sitting bravely in all her regal beauty. As she paddled toward the rapids, the chief could bear his grief no longer. Quickly he pushed his own canoe into the river and paddled toward her. The rapids drew both canoes toward the roar of the falls. The chief could not save his daughter, nor himself. Together they were swept over the cataract to their deaths. The legend tells us that they are still there today. Eagle Eye and Lelawala dwell together in a cave behind the falling waters.

The Indian legends were an attempt to explain the thundering cataract and its great gorge. The mystery and beauty of the falls have fascinated many people since the days of the Indian. Niagara Falls is one of the natural wonders of the world. Tales of its majestic beauty and awesome power have brought people from all over the earth to visit and admire the thundering waters.

Niagara's attraction lies in three things. The first is the falls themselves—the American Falls and the Horseshoe Fall of Canada. The second is the Niagara Gorge where the rushing waters run foaming to Lake Ontario. The third is the churning Whirlpool, where the waters form a great spinning circle before they escape to run to the north.

Great natural phenomena have always been a challenge to man—a challenge to explain and a challenge to conquer.

Daredevils challenge nature

What did Sam Patch do?

The challenge to conquer has led to a great many spectacular exploits. Men have tried to conquer the falls, the rapids, and the whirlpool. Some have succeeded, but more have failed.



The first of the "Niagara Fools" to risk his life was Sam Patch. In the summer of 1829, the people of the falls became very interested in Sam's preparations. At the foot of Goat Island, down near the bottom of the falls, he set up two ladders. These long and spindly things came together ninety-seven feet above the water in a small platform. Twice that summer Sam Patch risked his life. Standing on the platform, he boldly looked over the crowd watching him. Then taking a great leap, and holding his arms stiffly by his sides, he dropped like a stone. Down and down he fell, ninety-seven feet, into the water below. Popping up to the surface of the water he swam to the base of his ladders, climbed out, and waved his arms to the shouts of the crowd.

Who first conquered the gorge?

The next daredevil to perform at the falls was Blondin, billed as the greatest tightrope walker in the world. Blondin was born in France in 1824 as Jean Pierre Gravelot. As a little boy, he showed an unusual sense of balance. His parents sent him to the School for Gymnasts at Lyons. For several years after that he traveled with a company of acrobats.

Blondin challenged the great gorge of Niagara in the summer of 1859. His tightrope was stretched 1,100 feet across the gorge. It hung 160 feet above the waters below. About five thousand people gathered to see the brave Blondin attempt a feat that no other man had tried.

First, Blondin made a careful inspection of his equipment on the lip of the gorge. Then, holding at its middle a long pole as a balancing staff, he started across. Halfway over he stopped and sat down on the tightrope. The crowd gasped at his boldness. He got up, went a bit further, and then lay down on his back. Again, a bit further on, he turned a somersault, 160 feet above the raging waters.

Quickly, then, without any further display of contempt for the gorge, he walked the rest of the way to the Canadian shore. The band struck up the French national anthem, "The Marseillaise," and the crowds cheered.

In less than thirty minutes he was back again. This time he paused on the trip across and took a photograph of the river. Then he took a chair out on the rope and for a few death-defying moments he balanced himself on the chair on the rope. Again and again the crowd cheered these unbelievable feats of skill and daring.

A few days later Blondin was out on the rope again. This time he crossed blindfolded. His amazing skill also enabled him to make

the trip with his feet chained together. On another trip he crossed with his feet in baskets. One day he carried a stove out on the rope. There, balancing the stove carefully, he cooked an omelet over the rushing waters far below.

Probably the most amazing feat performed by Blondin took place on August 17, 1859. On that day he carried his manager, Harry Colcord, across the rope on his back. The trip was almost too much for them, but both reached the opposite shore safely. It certainly was an unusual event in the life of a manager!

Blondin returned to the falls several times after that first exhibition. He performed again in 1860 before the Prince of Wales, who was then visiting Canada. He lived to be an old man with seventy years of memories of death-defying feats on the high wire. Unlike many of his less fortunate fellow performers, he died peacefully in his own bed.

There were many others who defied the angry waters of the river. Some of them jumped from the bridges during the eighteenth-seventies and eighties. Others used the tightrope and crossed the gorge with wheelbarrows and on bicycles. One of the later daredevils was a woman, Signora Maria Spelterini, who crossed the wire with her feet in baskets.

What adventures did the rapids hold for challengers?

Not all the daring men and women who came to the falls tried to cross the gorge. There were the falls themselves to conquer as well as the rapids below. During the 1880's, several people attempted each of these tasks. Captain Matthew Webb, who already swum the English Channel, tried to master the Whirlpool Rapids in 1883. He got through the rapids safely but was drowned in the whirlpool itself.

Webb was followed by a Boston policeman, William Kendall, who was successful in swimming the rapids and gaining the shore of the whirlpool. Kendall told about his swim later. The great force of the whirlpool and the pounding of the water had almost been enough to finish him.

Others tried to go through the rapids in boats or in barrels. Carlisle Graham, George Hazlett, and William Potts were three of these. Two women also tried during this period. The first was Maud Willard of Canton, Ohio. She died while trying to go through the rapids in Graham's barrel. Another woman, Sadie Allen, later made the same trip with success.

One of the most successful of the rivermen was a native of the village of Niagara Falls, Ontario. This was William "Red" Hill.

He cheated the rapids several times in boats and barrels. One of his less pleasant tasks was to take from the river the bodies of those who were not so fortunate.

What daredevils performed at the waterfalls?

A few people have gone over the falls and lived to tell their stories. On October 4, 1901, Annie Edson Taylor rode over the Horseshoe Fall in a barrel that was specially built for the task. Bobby Leach, from England, also did it in a steel barrel in 1911. The same falls was the site of a successful trip by Jean Lussier. He made the trip in a thick-walled ball on July 4, 1928.

Others have attempted to plunge over the cataract but have failed. The last of these was a son of "Red" Hill, William Hill, Jr. He was drowned while trying to go over the falls in a craft made of inner tubes on August 6, 1951.

But the most spectacular story of all occurred in July, 1960. Roger Woodward was boating above the rapids with his sister, Deanne, and a family friend, James Honeycutt. While trying to repair the motor, they drifted into the rapids and the boat capsized throwing them into the churning waters. Deanne was rescued at the very brink of the Horseshoe Fall. Honeycutt was drowned. But seven-year-old Roger plunged over 160 feet into the waters below. His brightly colored life jacket was spotted by the crew of the *Maid of the Mist* and he was pulled to safety.

One of the interesting feats that took place was the flying of an airplane over the falls. That might not seem such a great event in our day of jets and helicopters. But in 1911, when Lincoln Beachy did it, things were different. The planes themselves were undependable. It was a great risk just to go up in one of them. The pilots were men of considerable courage. Beachy was one of the attractions of the International Carnival held that year.

From the Wright Brothers who were still in the experimental stages of aircraft design and construction, Beachy was to get \$2,500 for two days of flying. If he flew over the falls he was to earn an additional \$1,000. Many expected that he would not try, especially when the day broke with a high wind. The air currents were very treacherous over the falls and the river even at best. In the frail planes of those days, it was truly a great gamble.

Beachy did not disappoint the crowds. Near the end of the day, about six o'clock, the plane appeared over the Horseshoe Fall. Dropping down through the great cloud of mist that rose high above

the falling waters, Beachy leveled out about twenty feet above the river and flew under the first steel arch bridge. Pulling back on the stick, he brought the plane rapidly up on the other side and landed safely on the Canadian shore.

Why did the Maid of the Mist risk the rapids and whirlpool?

We cannot leave this part of our story without telling about the famous *Maid of the Mist*. The second boat to bear this name was launched in 1854. It carried sightseers around in the river just below the falls. The operator of the boat, W. O. Buchanan, was not as successful as he had hoped with the "Maid." He was forced to sell her, but to do so, he had to deliver her downstream at Queenston. This meant that the little vessel would have to run the rapids and escape the whirlpool.

The captain of the vessel was Joel R. Robinson. James McIntyre and James Jones also went along on the dangerous trip. The little vessel got up steam and chugged out into the flat water below the falls on June 5, 1861. It seemed like a routine trip at first, but a careful observer would have noticed that her decks were remarkably clear of any loose gear. Suddenly, the wheel was thrown hard over, and the little boat plunged down the gorge. Down through the rapids she bounced. Her smokestack was broken off and her wheelhouse smashed. But she made the trip through the rapids and out of the clutches of the swirling whirlpool. The rest of the trip was uneventful, but it was a trip that none of the three men wished to take again.

Bridges span the gorge

How was the first bridge built?

A kite carried the first line across Homan Walsh was an expert young kite flyer of Lockport. But he never expected to be a hero with hundreds of people watching him fly his kite—not even when the new contractor in town offered a prize of five dollars for the boy who flew a kite across the gorge of the Niagara River. Of course Homan would try.

On the first day he tried, the wind was blowing as usual from the southwest. This meant that he had to cross the river by the ferry. Carrying his kite and kite string, Homan walked up to the lip of the gorge. He had named his kite "The Union," which was a very good name. If he was successful, the two shores of the Niagara would be united by a bridge.



Homan Walsh flies his kite

A good breeze was blowing and the kite was started up without difficulty. Higher and higher it went, tugging steadily at the string in Homan's hands. When the wind died down that evening, the kite would go down with it. But it would have carried the string across the chasm. Then a cord would be tied to the string and pulled across, to be followed in turn by a rope and a wire cable.

But the wind didn't die down. Night came and still the string pulled and pulled against Homan's hand as the kite sailed high in the dark sky, out of sight. The shore was lined with people, all watching Homan and his kite. Fires were lit on the Canadian side to keep the onlookers warm. First one and then another was lit, until the edge of the gorge was lighted by the flames. Then, across the river, a fire was lit on the American side, and another, and still another. Homan saw that he wasn't alone. Other people watched, many of them as anxious as he about the success of his kite. The sight of the fires and the people encouraged Homan.

Midnight came and finally the wind began to lessen. The kite didn't pull so hard on the kite string. Then from the other side of the river, carrying against the dying wind, came the sound of people cheering. Homan had done it! The kite was across the gorge and down on the other side. Now the work of pulling across the cord, the rope, and the wire cable could begin.

But wait. The sagging string was caught. In falling, it had snagged on an ice floe in the gorge. There was a tense moment as the strain on the kite string increased—and then the string snapped. The attempt to span Niagara was a failure.

Disappointed, Homan turned to leave for home. But he couldn't cross on the ferry. For eight days he was sheltered in a Canadian home because of the weather. When it cleared, he tried again with his kite. And this time he was successful. The first strand of a bridge across the gorge was a plain, ordinary string. Then the cord and the rope were drawn across. The wire cable followed.

Hulett's cable-car carried men and supplies An iron basket, designed by a resident of Niagara Falls, T. G. Hulett, rode on the first cableway across the Niagara River.

With this basket to carry men and supplies, the bridge was begun. But there were many more tense moments before the bridge was finished.

Men worked in danger On October 10, 1843, a strong wind began to blow. The workmen watched the swinging cable and the basket as they were tossed about by the wind. Then, suddenly, in a violent burst, the wind wrecked one section of the bridgework built upon cables. The floor

with four men on it was thrown across the bridge cable. Back and forth, beaten by the wind, the four men tossed. Two hundred feet below the deadly river waited to swallow its victims.

A volunteer went to the rescue of his companions. Riding out across the gorge in the iron basket on the upper cable, he brought a ladder. Carefully lowering this down on the bridge cable below, the volunteer called out in encouragement. The first man grabbed the ladder and began his climb. The rescuers held their breath. At last he made it over the side and collapsed into the safety of the basket. Then the second, the third, and finally the last of the men was rescued from certain death. The Niagara gorge was not easy to conquer.

Finally the bridge was completed. For the first time, man had spanned the awesome gorge. A kite string, a cord, a rope, a wire cable had made possible a wooden bridge. The engineer for the first bridge was Charles Ellet. He was one of the four men who had replied to a letter asking about the bridge project. Each of the men who replied had their turn at building a bridge. Their names were John Roebling, Samuel Keefer, Edward Serrell, and Ellet.

What happened to the second bridge?

Edward Serrell had his turn next. He selected a site further down the river, at Lewiston. Like the first bridge, this was a bridge that was supported by cables. But it was larger than Ellet's. This was one twenty feet wide so both wagons and people could cross and pass each other at the same time. The distance between the towers on each side of the gorge was more than a thousand feet. This bridge collapsed in 1864 after being battered by gale winds.

Why did Roebling's bridge endure?

The third bridge across the Niagara River was built by John Roebling. This engineer is better known as the man who built the famous Brooklyn Bridge. Ellet's bridge was a small footbridge, Roebling's was much more ambitious. It was designed to carry pedestrians, carriages, and railroad trains. The carriages and pedestrians would cross on a lower level, and the trains would run on an upper level.

The bridge was finally complete and ready for its first test on March 16, 1855. Starting from the Canadian side, a heavy freight engine weighing twenty-eight tons began pushing a string of twenty freight cars across the span. Each of the cars was loaded to twice its normal weight. Carefully the engineer eased the cars out further on the bridge. Finally the whole train, covering almost the whole length of the span, was on the bridge. A total weight of

268 tons, more than anyone ever expected to see in one trip, was carried by the bridge with no vibration at all. The bridge was clearly a success. As Mr. Roebling said later, "No one is afraid to cross."

What was the fate of Keefer's bridge?

Samuel Keefer began his bridge in the winter of 1867-'68. The first step was to carry the first cable across the gorge on the ice bridge below the falls. All during the year 1868, work went on steadily. By January of 1869, the bridge was complete. This was the longest bridge built to this time—1,268 feet between the towers.

The bridge was all wood except for the cables. Whenever parts needed repairing, however, they were replaced with steel so that, in time, the wooden bridge ended up as a steel one. It lasted just a few weeks more than twenty years. Just before its destruction it had been widened. All that summer and on into the fall, workmen struggled to get the job done before winter set in. Finally it was completed.

Nature challenges man

Then, on January 10, 1889, strong winds began to blow from the southwest. Across the edge of the Horseshoe Fall and straight down the gorge they roared. The bridge shuddered with the force of their blows. All that day and on into the night the winds tore at the bridge. About 11:30 that night Dr. J. W. Hodge started across the structure from Canada. He had been visiting a sick patient and wanted to get home. As he made his way, the wind tore at his clothes and blew sheets of water into his face. He had to hang on tightly, working his way across the bucking, swaying bridge foot by foot. At one time the wind tore the buttons from his overcoat. But the doctor couldn't pull it closed about him—he didn't dare take his hands from the bridge. The winter winds chilled him. Water and spray froze on his clothes. His hands grew numb with the cold. He must have wondered many times if he would reach the other side. Finally he was across and standing on good firm earth.



The first railroad suspension bridge across the gorge.

The bridge was not so fortunate. When the morning of January 11 came, all that was left of the once proud bridge, were the cables strung across from tower to tower. The suspender cables hung down uselessly. The roadway was at the bottom of the gorge.

But such a convenient way to cross the river was too important to abandon. Re-building began right away and, in the amazingly short time of 117 days, a new bridge was completed. But it lasted only ten years longer. This time it was destroyed, not by fierce gales, but by progress. The ever-increasing traffic over the bridge made it necessary to replace it with a stronger one.

What happened to the Falls View Bridge?

This span was the famous Falls View Bridge, built in 1898. It was a great steel arch bridge, one of the greatest in the world. It lasted a long time—until January 26, 1938. Then it too was wrecked by the force of nature. During the days just before its collapse, a high wind had driven huge floes of ice down the river. This ice jammed up in the gorge and began to pile higher and higher under the supports of the bridge. The pressure became greater and greater. Finally the support-arches of the span gave way. With a shudder, the bridge collapsed onto the ice jam in the gorge.

What is the latest bridge like?

The newest bridge is the Rainbow Bridge which now spans the gorge just below the falls themselves. There was some debate about who was to build the structure—private companies or a public agency. Because of these delays, it was not completed until 1941.

Although there have been other bridges built over the Niagara River, the ones we have mentioned are the most important. There is one other modern bridge. This is the Michigan Central Railroad cantilever span which was built in 1925. It is located just above the Whirlpool Bridge. Of course, we cannot forget the new International Power Bridge built in the 1960's by the New York State Power Authority near Lewiston.

Laws protect the beauty of Niagara

Why was there early concern for the falls?

As early as 1832, a British army officer was afraid that "... the beautiful scenery about the Falls is doomed to be destroyed." He felt that the natural beauty of the area ought to be preserved. Villages, red and yellow painted stores, and smoking chimneys would spoil the spectacle of Niagara, he said.

All during the middle of the nineteenth century, when what he had foretold was taking place, there were people who felt saddened by it. What these people objected to was the commercialization of the Falls, the use of them to make money. This was done in two ways. One of these was to build mills in order to make use of the water power that was available. The other was to take advantage of the many people who came to visit the area. This meant the building of hotels, restaurants, and saloons, of gaudy souvenir shops, and of stairways to view the falls.

The mills turned aside water for their own uses and thus reduced the amount that flowed over the falls themselves. The businesses catering to the tourist trade made a cheap carnival out of the magnificent spectacle of Niagara. In addition, all kinds of people living off the tourist trade gathered to annoy the visitor. On every side the tourist was beset by someone who wanted money. It cost about a quarter to ride the railway from the foot of the American Falls to the top, another fifty cents to visit Goat Island, and so forth.

Brightly painted buildings, run-down board fences, and huge advertising signs spoiled the beauty of the Falls. More and more citizens became concerned about this. Even people who had never visited the falls wanted something done to prevent further annoyances of this sort.

How did the reservation movement help preserve Niagara for the future?

In the summer of 1878, Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General of Canada, talked with Governor Lucius Robinson of New York State about the possibility of making the area into a joint government reservation. The following year, Governor Robinson, in his annual message to the legislature, recommended the setting up of a joint commission by the governments of New York and Ontario, Canada. This was done and a survey of the situation was made. The report of the commission was accepted by the state in 1883 and steps were taken to take over the land from private owners.

The state obtained the land by 1885 and the Niagara Reservation was established. The word "reservation" was important to these men. This was not to be just a "park" or a recreation area, but a region "reserved" for the public to enjoy forever.

Since that time, the mills have gone from Goat Island and the river's edge, the ugly board fences have been torn down, and Niagara has been in many ways restored to its early beauty. At present, more work is taking place. The Niagara Power Project is

the most recent. After the most careful engineering studies, a way has been found to use more of the natural power of the great cataract than ever before. Yet the beauty of the river and the falls have not been marred. A Niagara Diversion Treaty was signed in 1950 which set up an International Joint Commission of Canadians and Americans. This commission worked to see that the turning aside of water for power purposes would not take away the beauty of the falls. By a system of underwater dams, control gates, and storage pools, the power of Niagara has been harnessed in the interest of man and its beauty preserved for his enjoyment.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

The authors feel that an extensive bibliography is unnecessary in a book of this type. For those who are interested, the following is a sampling of the more important sources.

GENERAL WORKS. Charles Dow's *Anthology and Bibliography of Niagara Falls* (1921) was a valuable guide to other sources. Edward Williams' history of Niagara County in John Horton et al, *History of Northwestern New York*, 3 vols. (1947) and his *Niagara County, N. Y.* (1921) were also used. Merton Wilner's *Niagara Frontier* (1931) and the Standford Publishing Company's *History of Niagara County* (1878) were consulted, the latter being especially helpful. The *Souvenir History of Niagara County*, published by the Pioneer Association of Niagara County in 1902 has much first hand materials from early settlers of the area. Two series deserve mention although they deal with specific rather than general topics. These are the many *Publications* of the Buffalo Historical Society and the *Occasional Publications* of the Niagara County Historical Society.

SPECIFIC WORKS. On geology, William J. Miller's *The Geological History of New York State* (1924), and A. W. Grabau's *Geology of Niagara Falls and Vicinity* (1901) were the chief sources.

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Furnaces such as these produce metal alloys.

For the period of early settlement, the classic work is Orasmus Turner's *Pioneer History of the Holland Land Purchase* (1849). In addition the various volumes in the *Occasional Publications* of the Niagara County Historical Society provide considerable information particularly on the local communities within the county. Paul D. Evans, *The Holland Land Company* (1924), Clayton Mau's *Development of Central and Western New York* (1944) were useful, along with R. L. Higgins' *Expansion in New York* (1921). Frank Severance's *Recalling Pioneer Days* (1922) in the Buffalo Historical Society's *Publications* has many valuable original accounts of early pioneer life in the area.

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many works of travelers to the region, Edward Williams' history of the county, previously cited, tourists guide books and view books were important materials. Louis Mazzei's unpublished monograph, *Development of Hydroelectric Power in Niagara Falls, New York to 1925*, (1956) was also helpful.

PRIMARY MATERIALS. The greatest reliance was upon the various newspapers and magazines of the day. Many of the works previously cited include large selections from primary materials, i.e. Dow's *Anthology*. Diaries and letters were used where available as well as autobiographies, memoirs and materials of a similar type. Reuben G. Thwaites' *Jesuit Relations* was consulted extensively. Orasmus Turner's *History of the Holland Land Purchase* contains considerable primary material. The Beers Publishing Company's *Atlas of Niagara and Orleans Counties* has valuable maps and illustrations. The collection of maps and reproductions in the office of the Niagara County Historian is excellent. Federal census data was used extensively, state census data less so. The journals of travelers to the area beginning with the reports of the French and continuing through John Bartram, Theodore Dwight and many others have much descriptive material. The files of letters, clippings, and other assorted materials in the Niagara County Historian's Office, plus the artifacts in the Niagara County Museum in Lockport were helpful. The usual gazeteers, such as those by French and Spafford were also consulted.

Your History Workshop

Words and terms you should know

spirits	phenomena	tribute
legend	spectacular	cavern
regal	exploits	chasm

Where is it on the map?

Canadian Falls	Upper Niagara River	Niagara Gorge
American Falls	Lower Niagara River	Whirlpool Rapids

Who's Who in history?

Sam Patch	William Hill, Sr.	Charles Ellet
Blondin	Joel Robinson	Edward Serrell
Maria Spelterini	Homan Walsh	John Roebling
T. G. Hulett	Charles Stuart	Samuel Keefer
Lord Dufferin	Dr. J. W. Hodge	

How carefully did you read?

1. What is the tale of Hinan and the serpent of the falls?
2. What is the story of Lelawala?
3. What purposes did Indian legends serve?
4. What is meant by the term "Niagara Fools?"
5. What were some of Blondin's feats?
6. Who were the people who challenged the whirlpool and rapids of the lower Niagara River?
7. What daredevils challenged the waterfalls?
8. Why did the *Maid of the Mist* risk the rapids and whirlpool?
9. How was the first bridge built across the gorge?
10. What was the purpose of Hulett's iron basket?
11. What were the first and last bridges to span the gorge?
12. What is the purpose of the Niagara Diversion Treaty?
13. How did mills affect the beauty of the falls?
14. How did the Reservation Movement help preserve Niagara for the future?

Activities to help you understand Part VI

1. Draw a cartoon to illustrate one of the following events:
 - A. Sam Patch and his ladders
 - B. The Great Blondin on the tightrope
 - C. Hinan throwing bolts of lightning at the serpent
 - D. Lelawala and Eagle Eye approaching the falls
 - E. The *Maid* running the rapids
 - F. Leach going over the falls in his barrel
 - G. Beachy's flight over the falls
 - H. Homan Walsh flying his kite across the gorge.
2. On a large map of the Niagara River locate each of the places mentioned above in "Where is it on the map?" Sketch in the bridges which spanned the gorge.
3. Dramatize a "You Were There" program on one of the events mentioned in exercise number one.
4. Assume it is the year 1875. Write a newspaper editorial describing how Niagara Falls has been commercialized. Urge preservation of its beauty by asking your readers to support the Reservation Movement.
5. Write questions about "Niagara Fools," for example, "This person successfully met the challenge of the gorge. He was born in France. Who was he?"
6. To the section of the "Workshop" called "Books with exciting stories," add a biography about Niagara's bridge builders and daredevils. Read one of the biographies and report to the class. Make your report interesting so others will want to use the list of books you have prepared.
7. Form a panel to discuss one of these topics:
 - A. The Reservation Movement
 - B. Free use of Niagara's water for industrial growth
 - C. State control of the tourist industry

Note. — a = 1st column; b = 2d column.

Note. — q. = quoted.

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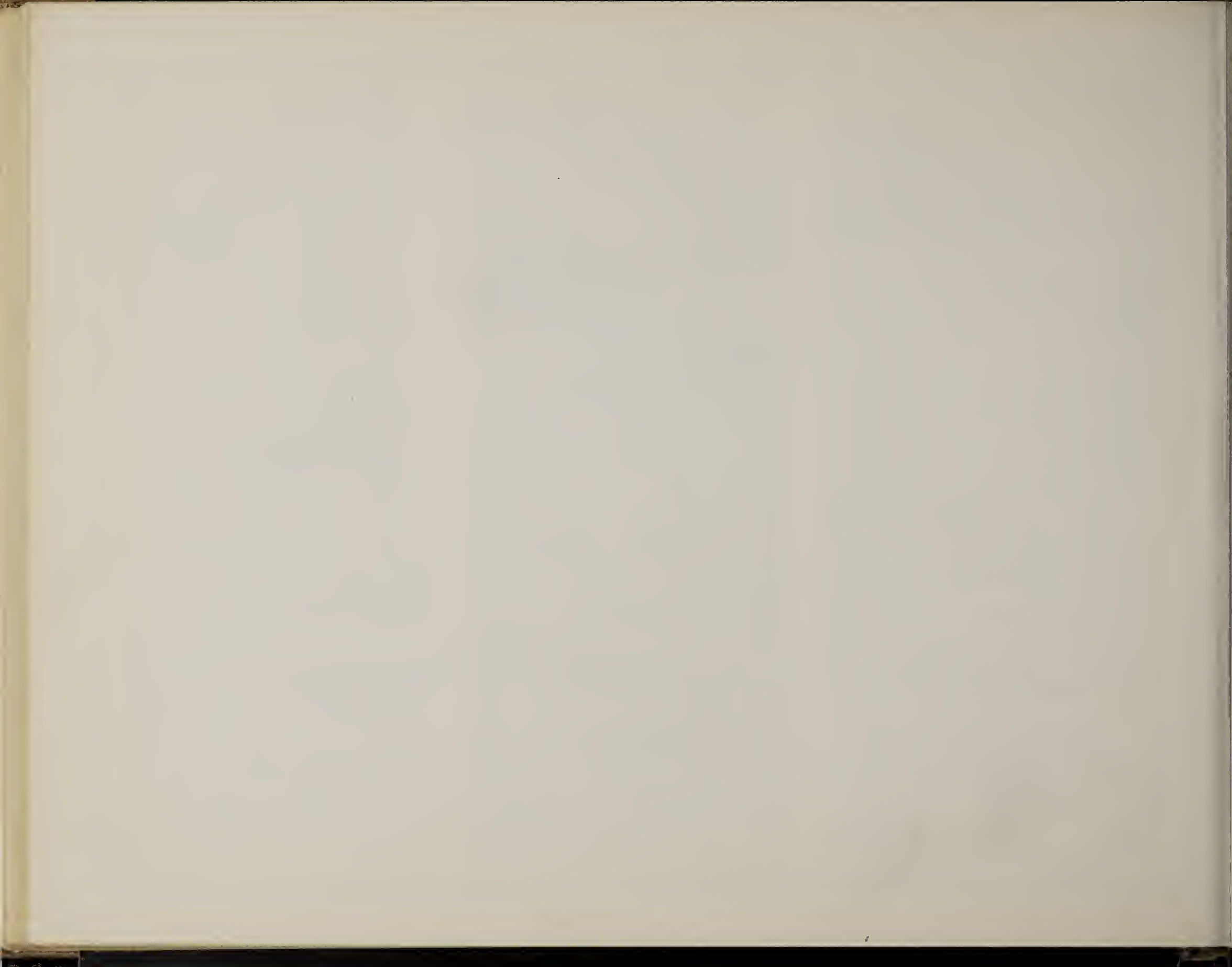
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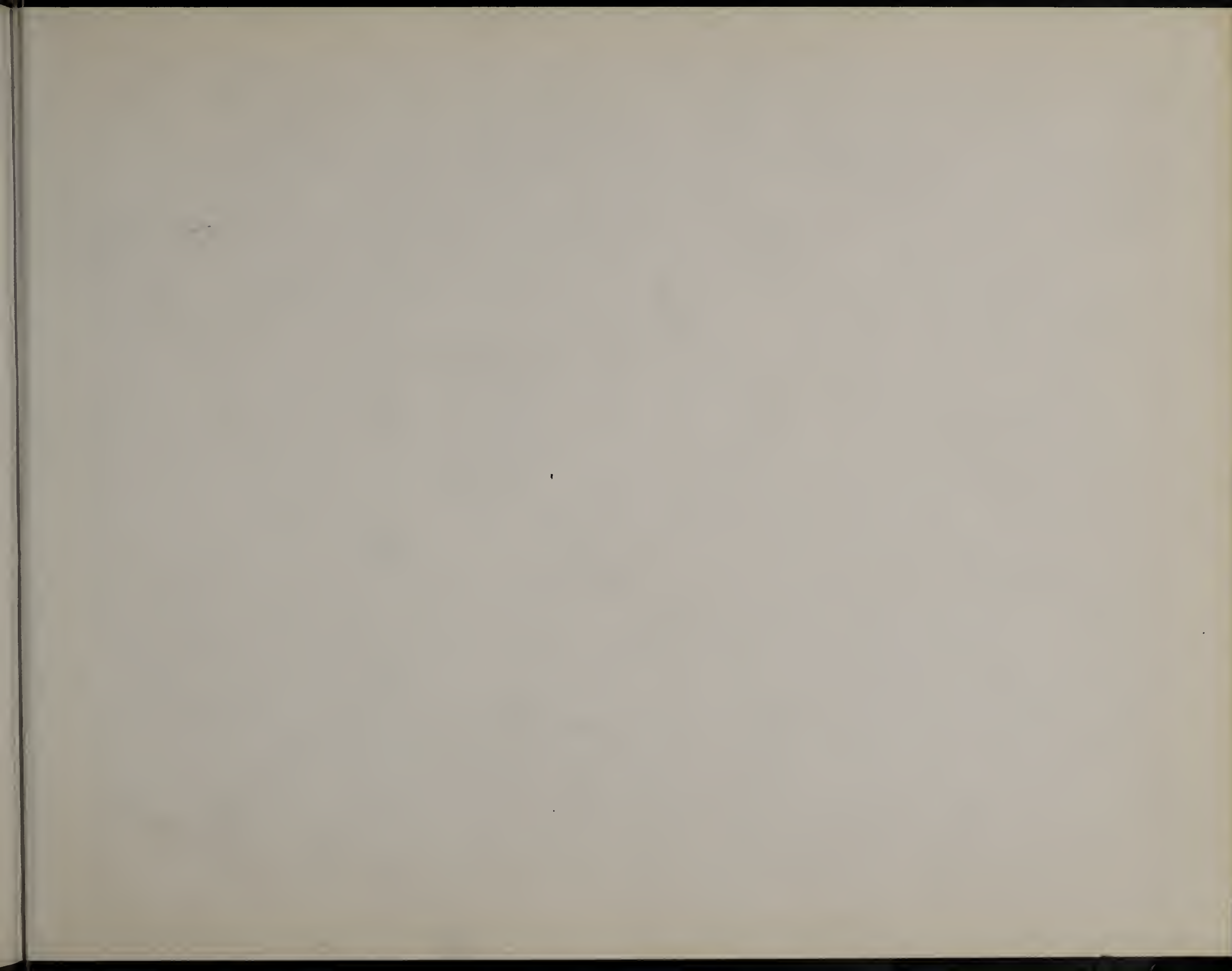
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